



GEOG 491(fall/winter or winter/fall): Honours Research(reading course, 6 credits)

The course consists of supervised reading, research and preparation of an undergraduate thesis under the direction of a faculty member. Prerequisite: GEOG 491. Restriction: only for U3 B.A., B.Sc. Honours and B.A. Joint Honours Geography students. Students must register in GEOG 491D1 or N1 and GEOG 491D2 or N2. No credit will be given for this course unless both GEOG 491D1 or N2 and GEOG 491D2 or N2 are successfully completed in consecutive terms.

GEOG 492(fall/winter or winter/fall): Joint Honours Research(reading course, 3 credits)

departments sign the form if the thesis is submitted to both departments. A student will receive permission to register in GEOG 491 or 492 once the Coordinator has received the signed form.

**Presentations** Students are required to present the results of their honours research. These poster/oral presentations are typically held in April during the second term of 491 or 492 in December (for students who started in January) near the end of classes or the early part of the final exam period.

**Submission of the first, penultimate, and final thesis drafts; and archival copy** You should plan to submit a minimum of three drafts/thesis versions to your Evaluators. If they agree, you can send them electronic copies; if they want paper copies, printing is your responsibility.

**First draft sections:** ~~Monday~~ December 9, 5pm.  
(July 31 if you started in January)

The *first draft sections* are to include -at a minimum:

- 1) your table of contents (chapter outline) for the entire thesis, annotated with detailed notes of what will go in each chapter
- 2) the good drafts of TWO (2) other sections/chapters (for example, ~~your~~ complete literature review and methodology).\*

\*Supervisors can generally give better feedback on more complete pieces of work. Your Supervisor may ask you to submit your first draft sections to your Reader as well, while others will have you wait.

It is very important to give your Supervisor a good indication of the shape of your thesis at this time.

**Final draft:** ~~Monday~~ March 17, 5pm  
(November 6 if you started in January)

The *final thesis draft* should be a complete version of your thesis, with a ~~table of~~ contents, all chapters, results, and analyses. It should be free of typographical errors, and should be in the correct thesis format. Generally, the only "rough" or incomplete elements might be diagrams, maps, or figures.

Your Supervisor and usually ~~also~~ ~~your~~ Reader read the thesis at this stage and recommend corrections and revisions, and are expected to return these to the students within about two weeks. *Please note that this is a norm, not a rule*, and that some Supervisors/Readers may need additional time. It is your responsibility to ensure that they have sufficient time to review and comment on this draft. In some cases, they may ask you to submit it before the deadlines above.

Students typically receive the most complete and extensive feedback from

examinable copy. Please confer with your Supervisor and Reader to see how involved your Reader will be in the development of your thesis.

Some Supervisors may ask to review individual chapters or versions of the thesis in between the first, final, and examinable copies. Be sure to discuss your Supervisor's preference with them

Archival Copy and Abstract Monday May 12, 5pm to Prof Turner  
*(January 8 if you started in January)*

Finally, you must submit an archival copy of your thesis and abstract to the University of Toronto Libraries (URR) at 0.6(8p)0.6((urrc 0 Tw 2.07a)-S0.

Fall semester, U2 Year. Discuss the Honours program with the Undergraduate Advisor for Geography and enrol in the program.

Winter semester, U2 Year. Take GEOG 381 (or equivalent approved by the Department). Contact potential Supervisors and Readers, and develop a thesis proposal in conjunction with a Supervisor once this faculty member has agreed to work with you.

April 15. Submit a signed Honours Thesis Proposal form to the Coordinator. Students cannot enrol in GEOG 491 or 492 without this form.

Summer between U2 and U3 Years in conjunction with your Supervisor:

Complete the development of the research question and design, and review relevant literature;

Data acquisition: Conduct fieldwork or lab work, compile data, visit archives, administer surveys, conduct interviews, etc. Obtain an Ethics Certificate before you begin any research involving human subjects

Fall semester, U3 year Enrol in GEOG 491 or 492. Finish research and tasks listed above; begin analysis and writing of thesis.

	<i>Fall Semester, U2</i>	<i>Winter Semester, U2</i>	<i>Summer</i>	<i>Fall Semester, U3</i>	<i>Winter Semester, U3</i>
<i>Courses and Program</i>	Enrol in Honours Program	Enrol in GEOG 381		Enrol in GEOG 491 or 492	
<i>Research and Writing</i>		Contact Supervisor and develop proposal  April 15: Submit signed proposal to Coordinator	Conduct Research  December 9: First draft sections		

## Subject Matter

The Honours thesis is a fully independent work of research. Students, in consultation with their thesis Supervisor and Reader, choose a suitable subject and find an appropriate approach within a geographical framework before starting GEOG 491 or 492. *The honours thesis is clearly distinct from a routine term paper and requires considerable preparation before the actual thesis course begins.*

The more successful theses tend to be those that address a specific topic and/or a restricted area. Studies of the economic geography of entire countries, or of global climate variations over a long period of time, for example, are almost inevitably superficial. Thus "Immigrant Settlement in Canada" would be too broad a subject; but A Comparative Study of Haitian Communities in Montreal and Toronto might prove feasible. Scholarly analysis, rather than simple description, should be the principal component of a thesis.

## Thesis Length and Format

The thesis should exceed neither 15,000 words nor 50 pages (5 line spacing) (exclusive of the reference list and appendices). It should be prepared in a professional style according to the *Honours Thesis Handbook* (available on the Honours Program web page and MyCourses), and must be free of typographical or spelling errors.

Honours Program web page <http://www.mcgill.ca/geography/undergraduate/honours>

## Ethical Conduct of Research and the Use of Human Subjects

Any research involving human subjects, including research projects that are carried out by undergraduate students, must receive a *Certificate of Ethical Acceptability* before the research can begin. This applies when research includes interviews, questionnaires, or the collection of data from human participants for analysis and presentation. This process is required by McGill and the Canadian Government and is described by the Council Policy Statement *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.<sup>1</sup>

You can find more information on Human Subjects review from the Research Ethics (REB) Office. You should first review the *Student Guide* and then discuss the matter with your Supervisor and/or the Coordinator. <https://www.mcgill.ca/research/research/human/reb>

*Undergraduates may not submit a REB application directly. Rather, your supervisor must submit an application as the Principal Investigator (PI), with you acting as their research assistant. (Depending on the project and supervisor, your thesis research may be covered under an existing REB certificate; they might only need to do an 'Amendment' application to add your name as a research assistant.)*

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