



## ENVS\*3000 Nature Interpretation

Winter 2026

Section: DE01

School of Environmental Sciences Credit Weight: 0.50

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### Course Details

**Calendar Description:** This course explores communication and experiential learning theories and their application to natural history interpretation and environmental education program design and delivery. Students will develop interpretive materials, plan an interpretive walk, and deliver the interpretive walk to a community group.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** BIOL\*2060

**Restriction(s):** ENVB\*3000

**Method of Delivery:** Distance Education (asynchronous online)

**Final Exam:** There is no final exam in this course.

### Instructional Support

**Instructor:** Dr. Amanda Hooykaas

**Email:** [amanda.hooykaas@uoguelph.ca](mailto:amanda.hooykaas@uoguelph.ca)

**Office Hours via Zoom:** Students may request a meeting with the Instructor or TA (Teaching Team) to discuss any issue that cannot be addressed via the Discussion Boards. Please note that further details will be posted in the **Announcements**. See also **Communicating with Your Instructor**.

**Teaching Assistants:** Anshu Beri ([beria@uoguelph.ca](mailto:beria@uoguelph.ca)); Angesom Gebremariam ([agebrema@uoguelph.ca](mailto:agebrema@uoguelph.ca)); Josee Kelly ([jkelly33@uoguelph.ca](mailto:jkelly33@uoguelph.ca))

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### Learning Resources

#### Required Textbook

**Title:** Interpreting Cultural and Natural Heritage for a Better World

**Author(s):** Beck, L., Cable, T.T., & Knudson, D.M.

**Edition / Year:** 1<sup>st</sup> Edition / 2018 **Publisher:** Sagamore Publishing **ISBN (eBook):** 9781571678669

**Price:** VitalSource eBook from Publisher: 68.00 USD; Co-Op Bookstore (Used): 139.95

You may purchase the eBook only at [University of Guelph Bookstore](#). Please note that DE textbooks are in the Distance Education section of the University of Guelph Bookstore. The [Guelph Campus Co-op Bookstore](#) may carry used print copies. You may also purchase the textbook directly from the publisher: [https://sagamorepub.com/products/interpreting-cultural-and-natural-heritage-for-a-better-world-2?\\_pos=1&\\_psq=interpreting&\\_ss=e&\\_v=1.0](https://sagamorepub.com/products/interpreting-cultural-and-natural-heritage-for-a-better-world-2?_pos=1&_psq=interpreting&_ss=e&_v=1.0) *(This is my suggestion – far less expensive and immediate access!)*

**Course Website:** [CourseLink](#) (powered by D2L's Brightspace) is the course website and will act as your classroom. It is recommended that you log in to your course website every day to check for announcements, access course materials, and review the weekly schedule and assignment requirements.

<https://courselink.uoguelph.ca>

**Ares:** For this course, you may be required to access course reserve materials through the University of Guelph McLaughlin Library. To access these items, select **Ares** on the navbar in CourseLink. Note that you will need your Central Login ID and password to access items on reserve.

For further instructions on accessing reserve resources, visit [How to Get Course Reserve Materials](#).

If at any point during the course you have difficulty accessing reserve materials, please contact the Course Material and Reserve Services staff at: Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 53621 | Email: [libres2@uoguelph.ca](mailto:libres2@uoguelph.ca)  
Location: McLaughlin Library, First Floor, University of Guelph <https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/find/course-reserves-ares>

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## Learning Outcomes

**Course Learning Outcomes:** While we may think of nature interpretation as really taking place in the context of a job, such as a park naturalist or teacher, there are many other times when skills in nature interpretation are put to the test. Throughout our lives we often find ourselves in situations where we interpret nature to others. Think of the number of times a parent shares aspects of nature to a child, or you unpack the area in which you live to a visitor. Indeed, commenting on a beautiful sunset is an interpretation of nature. Just what is the definition of nature interpretation? What theories support nature interpretation? Can interpretation be a science AND an art? How can we develop our skills as interpreters? How can we apply interpretive techniques in our daily lives and careers? ENV5\*3000 DE Nature Interpretation aims at providing opportunities for you to find answers to these and other questions.

This course can best be described as an applied course that helps you explore communication and experiential learning theories and their application to natural heritage (nature) interpretation and environmental education program design. You will also develop and present interpretive materials and a program within the context of the nature interpretation.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Summarize interpretive theory in relation to the environment
  2. Describe a diversity of approaches to environmental interpretation
  3. Explain the role of environmental interpretation in conservation and sustainability
  4. Develop a strong skillset related to audience assessment, the delivery of program objectives, and effective planning, communication, and debrief
  5. Communicate interpretive experiences in the field through a variety of approaches
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## Teaching and Learning Activities

**Method of Learning:** To meet your needs, given the wide range of interests and knowledge backgrounds, the course has been developed around several teaching aids and strategies. Together, the course website and textbooks form the foundation of this course. Using these resources, you will have the opportunity to be involved in a comprehensive learning experience. You will be involved in activities that include completing readings from the text, designing and planning a trail guide, assessing current interpretive offerings within the larger community, and planning an interpretative walk.

The structure of the course itself is designed to follow a framework of an interpretive program. Each component and activity will have an introduction with clear objectives. Examples, where possible, will be used to contrast effective techniques with those that are less effective. The theoretical support of these examples will be presented. Prior to moving to a new topic, summaries of the main points will be provided. Throughout the course, feedback and evaluation will be encouraged. Please take note that the course is designed to provide you with a model that you can use in your assignments: introduction with objectives, examples/experiences/theory, summary, feedback and evaluation.

## Course Structure

- Unit 01: Launching into Nature Interpretation
- Unit 02: Teaching Learners
- Unit 03: Risk versus Reward in Interpretation
- Unit 04: Nature Interpretation through Art and Planning for “All” Scenarios
- Unit 05: Nature Interpretation through Science
- Unit 06: Nature Interpretation through History
- Unit 08: The Role of Technology in Nature Interpretation
- Unit 09: Sense-Making of Nature Interpretation
- Unit 10: Nature Interpretation’s Role in Environmental Sustainability
- Unit 11: How to Actually Get a Job

**What to Expect for Each Unit:** Each unit will present framing content to help you better situate the course readings. There are three major questions/activities associated with each unit:

- 1) Who am I as an Interpreter?
- 2) Who is My Audience?,
- 3) How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful?

These are intended to help you consider how to apply unit concepts in specific situations.

**Schedule:** It is strongly recommended that you follow the course schedule provided below. The schedule outlines what you should be working on each week of the course and lists the important due dates for the assessments. By following the schedule, you will be better prepared to complete the assessments and succeed in this course.

## **Unit 01: Launching into Nature Interpretation**

### **Week 1 – Monday, January 5 to Sunday, January 11**

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: “Preface” (pp.xiii-xvii); Chapter 1: What is Interpretation? (pp.3-16)
- Hooykaas, A. (2021). Stewarding Places through Geography in Higher Education. *Journal of Geography* (Houston), 120(3), 108–116. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221341.2021.1895288>[https://ocul-gue.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_GUE/1neq0sb/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_2531429877](https://ocul-gue.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_GUE/1neq0sb/cdi_proquest_journals_2531429877)

#### **Activities**

- Familiarize yourself with the course website by selecting **Start Here** on the navbar.
- Review **Outline** and **Assessments** on the course website to learn about course expectations, assessments, and due dates.
- Confirm your access to the course reserve materials by selecting **Ares** on the navbar.
- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? Activities

#### **Assessments**

- Submit a paragraph (5-10 sentences) to DropBox that identifies the place you have chosen to learn from this term and discusses why you are drawn to this place by Sunday, January 11, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 02: Teaching Learners**

### **Week 2 – Monday, January 12 to Sunday, January 18**

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: Chapter 5: Guiding Principles of Interpretation (pp.81-101); Chapter 6: How People Learn (pp.105-123)

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? Activities
- Attend Podcast Information Session via Zoom (will also be recorded for future reference)

### **Assessments**

- Complete Podcast Group Contract by Sunday, January 18, 2026, at 11:59pmEST
- Submit top three topic choices for Podcast and intended audience (for approval) by Sunday, January 18, 2026, at 11:59pmEST
- Complete Interpretation of Place Reflection/Exit Ticket 1 by Sunday, January 18, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 03: Risk versus Reward in Interpretation**

### **Week 3 – Monday, January 19 to Sunday, January 25**

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: Chapter 7: Serving Diverse Audiences (pp.127-158)
- Ares: Helping Teachers Unpack their “Invisible Knapsacks”
- Ares: Parents pray while waiting for names 12 boys, teacher drown on canoe trip 18 survivors due out today

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? activities

#### **Assessments**

- Complete Group podcast detailed outline/plan for podcast due by Sunday, January 25, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 04: Nature Interpretation through Art and Planning for “All” Scenarios**

### **Week 4 – Monday, January 26 to Sunday, February 1**

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: Chapter 3: Values to Individuals and Society (pp.41-56); Chapter 10: Arts in Interpretation (pp.215-230)
- Ares: At the Heart of Art and Earth: An Exploration of Practices in Arts-Based Environmental Education
- Ares: “Flow, The Secret to Happiness” ([https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly\\_csikszentmihalyi\\_on\\_flow](https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_on_flow))
- Website: <https://www.gallery.ca/collection/collecting-areas/indigenous-ways-and-decolonization/indigenous-art> (look around)
- Hooykaas, A. L. (2022). Placelessness and Dis-ease: Addressing the Need for Familiar Places for At-Risk Youth. In R. A. Dunkley, H. Pitt, & T. A. Smith (Eds.), *Unfamiliar Landscapes* (pp. 441–459). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94460-5\\_18](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94460-5_18)

#### **Activities**

- Watch “The Group of Seven at 100: Virtual Curatorial Talk” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuQHfLIbnSw>
- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? Activities
- Meet as a team with member of Teaching Team for Mandatory Consultation Session

#### **Assessments**

- Complete Interpretation of Place Reflection/Exit Ticket 2 by Sunday, February 1, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 05: Nature Interpretation through Science**

### **Week 5 – Monday, February 2 to Sunday, February 8**

#### **Readings**

- Ares: Convergence Between Science and Environmental Education
- Ares: Evaluating Environmental Education, Citizen Science, and Stewardship through Naturalist Programs

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? activities

#### **Assessments**

- Complete Interpretation of Place Reflection/Exit Ticket 3 by Sunday, February 8, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 06: Nature Interpretation through History**

### **Week 6 – Monday, February 9 to Friday, February 13**

**Note:** This is a shortened learning week because of the Winter Break. Please note any due dates carefully.

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: Chapter 14: Interpretation and the Written Word (pp.303-322); Chapter 15: Interpreting History (pp.325-343)

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? activities

#### **Assessments**

- Nothing due; please identify and attend a live interpretative event this week if you haven't yet!

## **Unit 07: Nature Interpretation through Music**

### **Week 7 – Monday, February 23 to Sunday, March 1**

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: "Chapter 8: Interpreting to the Masses" (pp.165-182)
- Ares: Gray, P. Krause, B. Atema, J., Payne, R., Krumhansl, C. & Baptista, L. (2001). The Music of Nature and the Nature of Music. *Science*. 291. 52-54.
- Ares: Sahi, V. (2011). Using folk traditional music to communicate the sacredness of nature in Finland. *Spiritual Values of Protected Areas of Europe*, 2, 129

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? activities

#### **Assessments**

- Complete Interpretive Event Report by Sunday, March 1, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 08: The Role of Technology in Nature Interpretation**

### **Week 8 – Monday, March 2 to Sunday, March 8**

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: Chapter 19: Evaluating Interpretation (pp.417-425)

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? Activities
- Attend Interpretation of Place Unessay Information Session via Zoom (will also be recorded for future reference)

#### **Assessments**

- Complete Interpretation of Place Reflection/Exit Ticket 4 by Sunday, March 8, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 09: Sense-Making of Nature Interpretation**

### **Week 9 – Monday, March 9 to Sunday, March 15**

#### **Readings**

- Textbook: Chapter 21: The Bright Future of Interpretation (pp.457-476) ...
- Environment and Climate Change Canada. (2025). "Canada's National Framework for Environmental Learning". [https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/get-involved/advancing-literacy/national-framework.html?utm\\_campaign=eccc-eccc-sm-25-26&utm\\_medium=smo&utm\\_source=linkedin&hsid=851dd35f-f217-4548-bd3c-20c3d150cba5&utm\\_profile=environment+and+climate+change+canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/get-involved/advancing-literacy/national-framework.html?utm_campaign=eccc-eccc-sm-25-26&utm_medium=smo&utm_source=linkedin&hsid=851dd35f-f217-4548-bd3c-20c3d150cba5&utm_profile=environment+and+climate+change+canada)

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? activities

#### **Assessments**

- Interpretive Podcast, Show Notes, Transcript with In-text Citations, and Reference List due Sunday, March 15, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## **Unit 10: Nature Interpretation's Role in Environmental Sustainability**

### **Week 10 – Monday, March 16 to Sunday, March 22**

#### **Readings**

- Ares: Why Environmental Educators Shouldn't Give Up Hope

#### **Activities**

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? activities

#### **Assessments**

- Complete Interpretation of Place Reflection/Exit Ticket 5 by Sunday, March 22, 2026, at 11:59pmEST
- Interpretive Podcast Self and Peer Evaluations due by Sunday, March 22, 2026, at 11:59pmEST

## Unit 11: How to Actually Get a Job

### Week 11 & 12 – Monday, March 23 to Thursday, April 2

#### Readings

- Ares: Why you will fail to have a great career

#### Activities

- Complete Who am I as an Interpreter?, Who is My Audience?, How Can I Make This Experience Meaningful? activities

#### Assessments

- Complete Unessay by Sunday, March 29, 2026, at 11:59pmEST
- Complete Unessay Peer Response by Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at 11:59pmEST (access dependent on your own submission!)

#### Assessments

The grade determination for this course is indicated in the following table. A brief description of each assessment is provided below. Select **Content** on the navbar to locate **Assessments** in the table of contents panel to review further details of each assessment. Due dates can be found under the Schedule heading of this outline.

**Table 1: Course Assessments**

Assessment Item	Weight	Due Date*	Learning Outcomes
Interpretive Event Report (Individual)	20%	Sunday, March 1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Interpretation of Place Project (Individual)			1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Bi-weekly Exit Ticket (x5) (Individual)	25%	January 18, February 1, 8, March 8, 22	1, 2, 3, 5
- Unessay (Individual)	20%	Sunday, March 29	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Peer Response (Individual)	5%	Wednesday, April 1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Interpretive Podcast (Group)	15%	Sunday, March 15	3, 4, 5
- Group podcast detailed outline/plan (Group)	5%	Sunday, January 25	2, 4, 5
- Self and Peer Evaluation (Individual)	10%	Sunday, March 22	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>		

\* All assignments due at 11:59pmEST, unless otherwise specified

#### Assessment Descriptions

**Interpretive Event Report (20%):** You are to choose an **in-person interpretive event** that is at least an hour in length – this might be through a local land conservancy, a natural history museum, a provincial park, a public garden, or another organization. This cannot be a self-guided experience. You will be required to write a 7–8-page paper on the event (this length does not include a title page or list of references; those will be in addition to this). This will not be a review or summary of the presentation; it should go deeper into analysis



and reaction. It should discuss the interpretive approaches used by the interpreter(s), address the event's importance and purpose, state reactions to the content and quality of the event, and connect it to ideas and material presented in class. It must also include your own reflections of the event. Within the report, you will be required to clearly and effectively reference at least four chapters of the textbook via in-text citations and are welcome to incorporate more and/or references to any recent peer-reviewed journal articles. Lastly, you will be required to include two images in your report: 1) a photo of you at the event, and 2) an image of an advertisement of the event.

**Interpretation of Place Project (50%):** How can we speak about places when we don't yet truly know them? For this component, you are to develop an intimate relationship with a nearby place by attending carefully, frequently, and deeply to what it has to say. This will be done through a series of investigations that revolve around three key place-responsive practices: sitting, walking around, and journaling. By sitting still in a place and wondering around within it, you will develop your capacity to pay attention and observe: to notice where you are and how your place swims in a complex flow of relational being. In your journal, in a form and format that makes most sense to you, you will record your observations and insights. This should include detailed observations of the local ecosystem, drawing upon course principles and personal experience to describe the landscape and its features. Your journal may be considered a primary source for your culminating project. There are multiple components to this assignment (both individual and group). Select Content on the navbar to locate Assessments in the table of contents panel to review further details of the assignment.

### **Choosing a place: sitting, walking, and journaling**

Some criteria to consider:

- You need to have regular access to the place and feel safe and comfortable being there alone for an hour or more at a time. If you are uncomfortable being outside alone, you might consider the buddy system of mutual care. (If you have any worries about this aspect of the course, let me know immediately.)

*My rules at the mandala are simple: visit often, watching a year circle past; be quiet, keep disturbance to a minimum; no killing, no removal of creatures, no digging in or crawling over the mandala. The occasional thoughtful touch is enough. I have no set schedule for visits, but I watch here many times each week. -David Haskell, The Forest Unseen, xiv*

- Your place needs to be contained within manageable boundaries. Because places are fluid and porous, these boundaries will be to some degree invented by you, but they can at least be described and mapped. A large park or trail system is too big a place for your project. A special section of trail is better. "Think little," says Wendell Berry (see his essay with that title). David Haskell wrote a whole book, *The Forest Unseen*, about his exploration of a hula hoop-size circle of ground in the Indiana forest; *Yardwork* is Daniel Coleman's book-long exploration of his back yard in Hamilton, Ontario. Of course, because a place is made of relationships (with people, other-than-humans, and even far-away places) the narratives of both these works also reach outward into the world, and inward toward the self. The message is that your place should not be too big to get to know well.

- Your place needs to be outside on the land. It will undoubtedly also be part of a “built” or “managed” human environment. The point is that the “more-than-human world,” or “other-than-human nature,” along with perceptible changes of weather and season, must be a part of how you will experience and explore your place.

**Bi-weekly Exit Ticket (25%):** Roughly every other week, you will be tasked with completing a timed “exit ticket” (which will only be available during the specific module to which it pertains). This will be a timed quiz (30 minutes) where you must respond to a prompt. Your response will be based on the experience of “your” place and its relationship to the weekly themes. In this, you will be expected to discuss readings and associated course materials as they relate to both the prompt and the place.

**Unessay (20%):** Research paper assignments are commonplace in academia, and while they should allow students the freedom to explore topics in depth and present ideas and findings in a logical manner, they often end up being somewhat unimaginative summaries of the literature. The purpose of the “Unessay” assignment is to give students a creative opportunity to engage with interpretive themes related to your specific place you’ve been spending time with. Students not only choose the topic, and therefore content, of their assignment, but also the *medium* by which the content is communicated to its intended audience. In other words, an Unessay will allow you to use higher order of thinking and learning and for this assignment, will require you to find ways to interpret the place for your audience. The following formats are not permitted: PowerPoint presentation or traditional essay. Besides enlarging your knowledge about a specific place, you will be able to gain and demonstrate skills in: information seeking – the ability to identify and read the literature efficiently; critical appraisal – the ability to apply principles of observation, analysis, and interpretation to varied sources of information and selection of what information to include; and communication – the ability to convey information and ideas effectively and concisely.

**Peer Response (5%):** For your video responses (between 3-5 minutes in length and completed via FeedbackFruits), please provide your thoughts on your two peers’ work. How might you relate? How does it resonate with you and your own unessay? What additional insights might you offer on the topic they have chosen? This response should be a combination of both reflection/recognition of their work and some connection to your own. Your mark will come from the quality of the response you provide to your peers, not on the response you might get from your peers on your own assignment. Be authentic, be organized, be supportive, be reflective, be insightful.

**Interpretive Podcast (15%):** In a group of 4-6 students, you will create a twenty-minute interpretive podcast on a unique topic of your choice as it pertains to the Arboretum and/or environmental science research happening within the City of Guelph. Note: These podcasts must be interpretive in nature and topics must be approved by the Teaching Team. In your proposal, you must clearly identify your proposed audience, rationale for topic, and potential approaches to the assignment (in both content and roles/schedule). There are multiple components to this assignment (both individual and group). Select Content on the navbar to locate Assessments in the table of contents panel to review further details of the assignment.

**Group Podcast Detailed Outline/Plan (5%):** The detailed outline/plan of your podcast should be between 3-4 pages in length and will include detail on your proposed audience, rationale, and specific needs of that group, rough timelines, possible music, key topics potential resources, proposed timeline for completing the assignment, etc. The more detail you provide, the more feedback we can provide you. This outline will then be discussed in a mandatory consultation session with a member of the Teaching Team.

**Self and Peer Evaluation (10%):** The evaluations must be carried out via FeedbackFruits, as it is linked with CourseLink. To participate in the review, you will log into FeedbackFruits via the Tools dropdown menu in the navbar. FeedbackFruits is a tool that can accept student submissions for review and then collect and organize feedback (including text-based comments and/or marks). Marks and any text-based feedback will be released to students once all the reviews are complete and reviewed by the instructor. In the Review phase, you will be assigned to evaluate your peers' contributions for this assignment. Your task as a peer evaluator will be to provide feedback for each prompt of the evaluation and provide text-based comments. You cannot assign every student the same grade and every grade above 8 and below 6 must also have a detailed comment that clarifies why this grade was chosen. Note the due date in the Schedule.

**Group Contract:** The group-based assessments are heavily weighted in this course. The expectations for this course are that students should be able to work effectively together to achieve results. It is essential that you ensure your groups remain cohesive and supportive if effective learning is to occur.

The course instructor requires group members to contract for this at the outset of the course. These group contracts will not be graded but are a required component of the course. To locate the group contract, select Dropbox from the Tools dropdown menu and open the folder "Group Contract". When completed, submit the Group Contract to the **Dropbox**.

**Social Loafing:** In the event of "social loafing" or other team dysfunction, or contravention of the group contract, the first course of action is to attempt to resolve these within the group, using the group contract as a resolution mechanism. The groups should identify and address the issue(s) early in the process, so speedy identification and resolution is key. Call a team meeting to discuss the issue(s); keep personalities out of the discussion focus on the issue(s) at hand. Look to your contract for solutions to the social loafing or team dysfunction. If this is not possible, it is your responsibility to raise these issues with the Course Instructor as a group.

**Grading of Individual and Group Work and Course Completion:** Students must pass all assessments in the course to receive a passing grade. For example, a student earning 80% in the group assessments of the course would fail the course if they did not achieve a passing grade in the individual assessments. The default position is that all students in a group will receive the same grade for group-based work. If there is a situation where a student is not fairly contributing to the production and completion of the group assignment and does not respond to group requests to enhance their efforts, group members should contact the Course Instructor. In special cases such as this, a peer evaluation process will be instituted to enable group members

to each assess a fair allocation of marks for the work completed. This assessment may result in group members receiving different grades for the same assignment. The instructor will have final say on the grade allocated in all cases. Such instances in this course are extremely rare, and the expectation is that all group members will direct their efforts toward proactively resolving internal issues related to working together.

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## Course Technology Requirements and Technical Support

**CourseLink System Requirements:** You are responsible for ensuring that your computer system meets the necessary [system requirements](#). Use the [browser check](#) tool to ensure your browser settings are compatible and up to date. (Results will be displayed in a new browser window). (<https://opened.uoguelph.ca/student-resources/system-and-software-requirements>; <https://courselink.uoguelph.ca/d2l/systemCheck>)

**FeedbackFruits:** This course will use the FeedbackFruits tool for peer evaluation. FeedbackFruits is a tool that empowers students to give meaningful feedback to their peers using structured rubrics. Learn more about the tool by reviewing the [Applicant & Candidate Privacy Statement policy](#) and the [Accessibility: WCAG Compliance](#) information. (<https://feedbackfruits.com/applicant-candidate-privacy-statement-policy>; <https://help.feedbackfruits.com/hc/en-us/articles/23527091756946-Accessibility-WCAG-Compliance>)

**Zoom Requirements:** This course may use Zoom as a video communication tool. A Webcam, headphones/speakers may be needed. Review the [Zoom information for students \(uoguelph\)](#) to ensure that your computer meets the technical requirements. (<https://support.opened.uoguelph.ca/students/courselink/tools/content/zoom>)

**Technical Skills:** As part of your online experience, you are expected to use a variety of technology as part of your learning:

- Manage files and folders on your computer (e.g., save, name, copy, backup, rename, delete, and check properties);
- Install software, security, and virus protection;
- Use office applications (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, Excel, or similar) to create documents;
- Be comfortable uploading and downloading saved files;
- Communicate using email (e.g., create, receive, reply, print, send, download, and open attachments);
- Navigate the CourseLink learning environment and use the essential tools, such as **Dropbox**,

**Quizzes, Discussions, and Grades** (the instructions for this are given in your course);

- Access, navigate, and search the Internet using a web browser (e.g., Firefox, Chrome); and
- Perform online research using various search engines (e.g., Google) and library databases.
- Use audio recording software

**Technical Support:** If you need any assistance with the software tools or the website, contact CourseLink Support:

University of Guelph Day Hall, Room 211

Email: [courselink@uoguelph.ca](mailto:courselink@uoguelph.ca) Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 56939

Toll-Free (CAN/USA): 1-866-275-1478

**Walk-In Hours (Eastern Time):**

Monday-Friday: 8:30am–4:30pm

**Phone/Email Hours (Eastern Time):** Monday-

Friday: 8:30am–8:30pm; Saturday: 10:00am–4:00pm; Sunday: 12:00pm–6:00pm

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## Course Specific Standard Statements

**Acceptable Use:** The University of Guelph has an [Acceptable Use Policy](https://www.uoguelph.ca/ccs/infosec/aup), which you are expected to adhere to. (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/ccs/infosec/aup>)

**Communicating with Your Instructor:** During the course, your instructor will interact with you on various course matters on the course website using the following ways of communication:

- **Announcements:** The instructor will use **Announcements** on the Course Home page to provide you with course reminders and updates. Please check this section frequently for course updates from your instructor.
- **Ask Your Instructor Discussion:** Use this discussion forum to ask questions of your instructor about content or course-related issues with which you are unfamiliar. If you encounter difficulties, the instructor is here to help you. Please post general course-related questions to the discussion forum so that all students have an opportunity to review the response. To access this discussion forum, select **Discussions** from the **Tools** dropdown menu.
- **Email:** If you have a conflict that prevents you from completing course requirements, or have a question concerning a personal matter, you can send your instructor a private message by email. The instructor will respond to your email within 48 to 72 hours.
- **Online meeting:** If you have a complex question you would like to discuss with your instructor, you may book an online meeting. Online meetings depend on the availability of you and the instructor and are booked on a first come first served basis.

**Netiquette Expectations:** For distance education courses, the course website is considered the classroom and the same protections, expectations, guidelines, and regulations used in face-to-face settings apply, plus other policies and considerations that come into play specifically because these courses are online.

Inappropriate online behaviour will not be tolerated. Examples of inappropriate online behaviour include:

- Posting inflammatory messages about your instructor or fellow students;
- Using obscene or offensive language online;
- Copying or presenting someone else's work as your own;

- Adapting information from the Internet without using proper citations or references;
- Buying or selling term papers or assignments;
- Posting or selling course materials to course notes websites;
- Having someone else complete your quiz or completing a quiz for/with another student;
- Stating false claims about lost quiz answers or other assignment submissions;
- Threatening or harassing a student or instructor online;
- Discriminating against fellow students, instructors, and/or TAs;
- Using the course website to promote profit-driven products or services;
- Attempting to compromise the security or functionality of the learning management system;
- Sharing your username and password; and
- Recording lectures without the permission of the instructor.

**Submission of Assignments to Dropbox:** All assignments for this course should be submitted electronically via the online Dropbox tool. When submitting your assignments using the Dropbox tool, do not leave the page until your assignment has successfully uploaded. To verify that your submission was complete, you can view the submission history immediately after the upload to see which files uploaded successfully. The system will also email you a receipt. Save this email receipt as proof of submission.

Be sure to keep a back-up copy of all your assignments if they are lost in transition. To avoid any last-minute computer problems, your instructor strongly recommend you save your assignments to a cloud-based file storage (e.g., Google Docs), or send to your email account, so that should something happen to your computer, the assignment could still be submitted on time or re-submitted.

It is your responsibility to submit your assignments on time as specified on the Schedule. Be sure to check the technical requirements and make sure you have the proper computer, that you have a supported browser, and that you have reliable Internet access. Remember that technical difficulty is not an excuse not to turn in your assignment on time. Don't wait until the last minute as you may get behind in your work. If, for some reason, you have a technical difficulty when submitting your assignment electronically, please contact your instructor or [CourseLink Support](https://support.courselink.uoguelph.ca/contact) (https://support.courselink.uoguelph.ca/contact).

**Late Policy:** If you choose to submit your individual assignments to the **Dropbox** tool late, the full allocated mark will be reduced by 10% per day after the deadline for the submission of the assignment to a limit of five days at which time access to the Dropbox folder will be closed. Extensions will be considered for medical reasons or other extenuating circumstances. If you require an extension, discuss this with the instructor as soon as possible and well before the due date. Barring exceptional circumstances, extensions will not be granted once the due date has passed. These rules are not designed to be arbitrary, nor are they inflexible. They are designed to keep you organized, to ensure that all students have the same amount of time to work on assignments, and to help to return marked materials to you in the shortest possible time.

**Obtaining Grades and Feedback:** Unofficial assessment marks will be available in the **Grades** tool of the course website. Your instructor will have grades posted online within 2 weeks of the submission deadline, if the assignment was submitted on time. Once your assignments are marked you can view your grades on the course website by selecting Grades from the Tools dropdown menu on the navbar. Your course will remain open to you for seven days following the last day of the final exam period. Final grades will be available at the end of the semester. University of Guelph degree students can access their final grade by logging into [WebAdvisor](#) (using your U of G central ID). Open Learning program students should log in to the [OpenEd Student Portal](#) to view their final grade (using the same username and password you have been using for your courses).

**Turnitin Originality Check:** In this course, your instructor will be using **Turnitin** for some assessments; Turnitin is integrated with the CourseLink **Dropbox** tool to detect possible plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph. All individual assignments submitted to the Dropbox tool will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. A major benefit of using Turnitin is that you will be able to educate and empower yourself in preventing academic misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

**Last Day to Drop Course:** The final day to drop Winter 2026 courses without academic penalty is the last day of classes: April 6, 2026. After this date, a mark will be recorded, whether course work is completed or not (a zero is assigned for missed tests/assignments). This mark will show on the student's transcript and will be calculated into their average.

**Use of Artificial Intelligence:** The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in this course must align with academic integrity principles. Students are expected to complete their work independently and showcase their problem-solving abilities. Undeclared and/or unauthorized use of AI tools to produce coursework is considered a form of academic misconduct. Any misuse of AI tools, including submitting AI-generated work, may be considered academic misconduct. For specific guidelines on acceptable AI use in your course, please check with your instructor. Review the [University of Guelph's Statement on Artificial Intelligence Systems, ChatGPT, and Academic Integrity](https://news.uoguelph.ca/2023/03/university-of-guelph-statement-on-artificial-intelligence-systems-chatgpt-academic-integrity/?method=load) for more information. (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2023/03/university-of-guelph-statement-on-artificial-intelligence-systems-chatgpt-academic-integrity/?method=load>)

**Copyright Notice:** Content within this course is copyright protected. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters and articles) have either been licensed for use in this course or have been copied under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. The fair dealing exemption in Canada's Copyright Act permits students to reproduce short excerpts from copyright-protected materials for purposes such as research, education, private study, criticism and review, with proper attribution. Any other copying, communicating, or distribution of any content provided in this course, except as permitted by law, may be an infringement of copyright if done without proper license or the consent of the copyright owner. Examples of infringing uses of copyrighted works would include uploading materials to a commercial third-party web

site, or making paper or electronic reproductions of all, or a substantial part, of works such as textbooks for commercial purposes. Students who upload to CourseLink copyrighted materials such as book chapters, journal articles, or materials taken from the Internet, must ensure that they comply with Canadian Copyright law or with the terms of the University's electronic resource licenses. For more information about students' rights and obligations with respect to copyrighted works, review the [Fair Dealing Policy](https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/about/policies/fair-dealing-policy). (<https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/about/policies/fair-dealing-policy>)

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**Standard Statements for Open Learning Program Students:** As a student at the University of Guelph, it is important to understand your rights and responsibilities and the academic rules and regulations that you must abide by. Open Learning program (OLp) students are required to follow the same Senate-approved academic regulations as University of Guelph undergraduate students. For information on academic misconduct, academic accessibility accommodations, academic accommodation of religious obligations, and withdrawal procedures, consult [Academic Policies and Procedures](#) and [Withdrawals, Refunds, and Transfers](#) on the School of Continuing Studies website. You may also contact the School of Continuing Studies' [Learner Success Advisor](#) for assistance. (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/continuing-studies/academic-policies/>; <https://www.uoguelph.ca/continuing-studies/withdrawals-refunds-transfers/>; [scs-counsellor@uoguelph.ca](mailto:scs-counsellor@uoguelph.ca))

**Standard Statements for Undergraduate Courses:** As a student at the University of Guelph, it is important for you to understand your rights and responsibilities and the academic rules and regulations that you must abide by. If you are a registered University of Guelph degree and associate diploma student, consult the [Undergraduate Calendar](#) for the rules, regulations, curricula, programs and fees for current and previous academic years. (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>)

**Academic Integrity:** The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar. (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-misconduct/>)

**Accessibility: University of Guelph Degree Students:** The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student. When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation



to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway. Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 days in advance, and no later than the first business day in November, March or July as appropriate for the semester. Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the [SAS website](https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/). (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/>)

**Accommodation of Religious Obligations:** If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements. See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations](https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-accommodation-religious-obligations/). (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-accommodation-religious-obligations/>)

**Copies of Out-of-class Assignments:** Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

**Drop Date:** Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/dropping-courses/) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar. (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/dropping-courses/>)

**Email Communication:** As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

**Health and Wellbeing:** The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and well-being services at the [Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness](https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a [Student Wellness Navigator](https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/navigation/) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our [mental wellbeing resources](https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/resources/). The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you. (<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/>; <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/navigation/>; <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/shine-this-year>)

**Illness:** Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

**Recording of Materials:** Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

**Resources:** The [Academic Calendars](https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs. (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/>)

**When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement:** When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-consideration-appeals-petitions/).

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