

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S. 82-70

MEMORANDUM

TO..... SENATE

From..... SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Subject..... Curriculum Changes - Geography

Date..... June 16, 1982

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting on June 1, 1982 gives rise to the following motion:-

MOTION:

"That Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.82-70 the proposed changes in Geography, including

- i) Addition of new course GEOG 301-3 - Geographic Ideas and Methodology
- ii) Deletion of GEOG 201-3 - Development of Geographical Ideas; and GEOG 406-2 - Geographical Methodology
- iii) Change in major requirements, add GEOG 301-3 - Geographic Ideas and Methodology to the required courses for major students.
- iv) Change in the course requirements, deleting GEOG 406-2 - Geographical Methodology, and adding GEOG 301-3 - Geographic Ideas and Methodology to the required courses for honours students."

MEMORANDUM

To: Professor Charles Hamilton
 Chairman, Curriculum Committee
 Faculty of Arts
 Subject: Changes in Undergraduate Program:
 Geography

From: G. A. Rheumer
 Department of Geography
 Date: February 18, 1982

At its meeting on February 4, 1982 the Department of Geography approved the following changes in its undergraduate program:

1. A new course, Geography 301-3, Geographic Ideas and Methodology. Rationale and outline attached.
2. The new course above will be required of all candidates for B.A. degrees in the department. (excluding minors)

Kindly place the above changes on the agenda for consideration at the next meeting of the Curriculum Committee.

Assuming that the above proposals of the department are accepted the following changes in the department's calendar entry will be necessary: (reference to 1981-82 calendar)

page 117

Under Upper Division Course Requirements:

add Geography 301-3 required of all candidates for the B.A. degree.
 Division A to remain as is.

page 118 (In Majors box)

Item c delete one course from Division C
 5 semester hours

add Geography 301-3
 3 semester hours

item "c" now becomes item "a", "a" becomes "b" and "b" becomes "c".

Item d change 5 semester hours of credit in any other Geography course numbered 300 and above to 7 sem. hrs. of credit in any other Geography courses numbered 300 and above.
 7 semester hours.

page 118 (In Honours Box)

Item c as above item c.

Item c now becomes item "a", "a" becomes "b", "b" becomes "c".

Item e delete Geog. 406-2 and change sub-total to 5 semester hours.

Item 3 change to 22 semester hours in any other courses numbered 300 and above, but not more than one regional course.

22 semester hours.

The requirements will appear as follows in the calendar:

Majors:

(a) Geography 301-3	(3 sem. hrs.)
(b) Five courses from Division A including at least one course from each of Sections I, II and III	(15 sem. hrs.)
(c) One course from Division B	(5 sem. hrs.)
(d) 7 semester hours of credit in any other Geography courses numbered 300 and above	<u>(7 sem. hrs.)</u>
Total hours required:	(30 sem. hrs.)

Honors:

(a) Geography 301-3	(3 sem. hrs.)
(b) Five courses from Division A including at least one course from each of Sections I, II and III	(15 sem. hrs.)
(c) One course from Division B	(5 sem. hrs.)
(d) Geography 491-5	(5 sem. hrs.)
(e) 22 semester hours in any other courses numbered 300 and above, but not more than one course from Division C	<u>(22 sem. hrs.)</u>
Total hours required:	(50 sem. hrs.)

The course description for Geog. 301-3 would appear after the Title "Upper Division Courses" (and before "Division A") as it appears on page 121 of the 1981-82 Calendar.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

Dr. George A. Rheumer

Chairman, U.G.S.C., Geography

Subject Geography 301.

From A. MacPherson

Geography

Date March 23, 1982.

A need has been recognised for a course on geographic ideas and methodology that would provide students majoring, and taking honours, in Geography with a clear idea of the nature of the discipline as a whole, its history and concepts, and, especially, of the different and sometimes conflicting types of approach to its subject matter.

Such courses are required by Departments of Geography at many other universities in Canada, notably at the University of British Columbia, and these courses have been recognised as an important part of the academic training of prospective geographers and also as necessary in order to avoid the consequences of too narrow specialisation in some sub-disciplinary area.

By dropping the requirement of a fourth-year regional geography course of five units and substituting a second-year course that carries only three, we are able to avoid a substantial increase in the number of required semester hours. The present proposal involves an increase of only one semester hour, and so it does not significantly reduce the students' freedom of choice or make more difficult the ability to specialise if this is the students' desire.



NEW COURSE PROPOSAL FORM1. Calendar InformationDepartment: GeographyAbbreviation Code: GEOG Course Number: 301 Credit Hours: 3 Vector: 2-2-0Title of Course: Geographic Ideas and Methodology

Calendar Description of Course: A study of contemporary geographical concepts in historical perspective, the course will examine the traditional approaches to the subject matter of geography, giving particular attention to present-day methodological debate and foci of interest.

Nature of Course 2 hours lecture; 2 hour seminar.Prerequisites (or special instructions): 30 credit hours completed.

What course (courses), if any, is being dropped from the calendar if this course is approved: Geog. 201-3, Geography 406-2

2. SchedulingHow frequently will the course be offered? Every semesterSemester in which the course will first be offered? 83-1

Which of your present faculty would be available to make the proposed offering possible? Courses to be replaced have already been taught by:

(201) E.M. Gibson, A. MacPherson3. Objectives of the Course (406) M.L. Barker, R.C. Brown, F.F. Cunningham, M.E. Eliot Hu

To provide all B.A. honors and majors in Geography with a knowledge of the discipline as a whole, its development, traditions and areas of interest, and the different approaches to its subject matter, including methodological debates.

E. Gibson, R.B. Horsfall, M. Roberts.

All other faculty would be involved from time to time.

4. Budgetary and Space Requirements (for information only)

What additional resources will be required in the following areas:

Faculty NoneStaff NoneLibrary Additional copies of some basic texts.Audio Visual NoneSpace NoneEquipment None

This course is well within the department's present capabilities and resources of people and equipment.

5. ApprovalDate: March 25/82

E. J. Gibson
Department Chairman

June 1/82
R. C. Brown
Dean

Chairman, SCUS

Course Outline

Geographic Ideas and Methodology

"The methodology of a field is not a grab bag of special techniques. In geography such techniques as map making, "methods" of teaching, or historical accounts of the development of the field are still often mistaken for methodology Methodology proper deals with the position and scope of the field within the total system of the sciences and with the character and nature of its concepts." (Fred K. Schaefer, Annals, Association of American Geographers, 1953, p.226).

"METHODOLOGY. In the narrowest sense, the study or description of the methods and procedures used in some activity. The word is normally used in a wider sense to include a general investigation of the aims, concepts and principles of reasoning of some discipline, and the relationships between its sub-disciplines. Thus the methodology of science includes attempts to analyse and criticize its aims, its main concepts (e.g. explanation, causality, experiment, probable), the methods used to achieve these aims, the subdivision of science into various branches, the relations between these branches... and so on. Some scientists use the word merely as a more impressive-sounding synonym for method." (Aaron Sloman, The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought - also available as the Harper Dictionary of Modern Thought.)

This course, required of all majors and prospective honour students in Geography, will examine traditions, approaches and issues in contemporary geography. Particular attention will be paid to present-day controversies and critiques.

Reading:

There is no single prescribed text. Members of the class will be expected to make themselves familiar with the general nature of geographic ideas and with the materials that geographers study. Students are urged at their earliest opportunity to read Preston E. James, All Possible Worlds: a History of Geographic Ideas, a literate, if limited, outline of the development of the discipline.

The following titles will be referred to frequently during the seminars:

Richard Hartshorne, The Nature of Geography.

This is a lengthy discussion, dating from 1939 and later revised, added to and summarized, based on the methodological writings of some leading geographers, principally German and American. It examines the methodological status of geography before 1940 and purports to be a statement of what geography was seen to be, rather than an argument as to what it might or should be. It was severely criticized by F.K. Schaefer in 1953, and the resulting controversy was a prelude to what, for a while came to be known as the "new geography" of the 1960s.

Richard Hartshorne, Perspectives on the Nature of Geography, 1959.

A development, updating and, to some extent, a clarification of the Nature of Geography. The main points are readily available from chapter summaries, and members of the class should make themselves familiar with the nature of the discussion. Much has happened in geography in the past twenty years that was not anticipated in this book; but Perspective ... is a clear statement of geographical orthodoxy in the mid fifties, even if it says little about the kinds of problems being discussed today.

Preston E. James, All Possible Worlds. 1973.

A history of geographic ideas, rather than a geographical methodology. Well-written and, with some serious and curious exceptions; complete so far as the work of individual key figures is concerned, the book's gravest shortcoming is the virtual absence of intellectual context. It has been suggested that the impression is given that geography was incestuously conceived in a vacuum, but that is an unjustified overstatement. The author is out of sympathy with the "new geography" and with the attempts of some workers to make geography more socially relevant; there is no discussion of what at this institution is thought of as cultural geography, and contemporary philosophical alternatives are ignored. Pay particular attention to the sections from Humboldt and Ritter on.

A full and detailed list of readings for seminar discussion and background will be provided at the beginning of term.

Additional References

Of inestimable value for purposes of communication are:

Bullock and Stallybrass, The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought (also known as Harper Dictionary of Modern Thought).

Raymond Williams, Key Words. Fontana paperback.

These will be used again and again in all sorts of courses and contexts, and are well worth owning.

Organization

Two hours lecture and one two-hour seminar each week. Seminars will discuss assigned topics and members of the class will be expected to have completed certain prescribed readings and to give oral presentations from time to time. Seminars will consider certain key ideas in method and methodology, and also examine selected substantive writings for their guiding concepts, methods and methodological status.

Grading

Grades will be based on a term paper and a final take-home examination. No grade will be assigned for seminars as such, but regular and satisfactory participation in these shall be prerequisite to a satisfactory grade in the course.