



**Maynooth
University**
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

Department of Geography

**Course Handbook
Third Year Geography 2023-24**

SEPTEMBER 2023

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1. Welcome

Dear Geography students,

We are delighted to welcome you back to the Maynooth University Department of Geography. As an ever changing collective of staff and research postgraduates, we have been providing programmes in Geography at Maynooth since 1970. So, we call each year on a long and successful heritage of teaching and learning, of world leading research and a commitment to pastoral care. We are all here to ensure your own personal success as you complete your undergraduate studies.

There has never been a better time to study Geography. Many aspects of the subject are on offer in Maynooth, each with its own perspective on the multiple overlapping crises the world faces today and tomorrow. These crises in society, climate, biodiversity etc. are all ones that geographers have shown are unprecedented and demand new ways of caring for each other and our planet.

We wish you every success on your own educational journey, tracing the steps of many who have come before you but each in their own way different. We hope you embrace the diversity and depth that Geography offers through its Third-Year programme, and emerge a stronger, active, more engaged citizen at the end. To stay abreast of this active and creative Department, you may want to follow us on Twitter and Instagram and also to sign up for notifications from our blog. You may also want to do some writing of your own either for one of our blogs or for our staff-student journal, Milieu. But, most of all, do talk to us about our research and consider how each part links together to aid our understanding of the Earth, our shared home, and how we can live in it better, together.

Best regards,

Dr Stephen McCarron,
Head of Geography,
Maynooth University.

2. Staff in the Department of Geography

All of us who work in the Department of Geography look forward to meeting you this year, and to getting to know you better. There are over 40 people working in the Department of Geography in total, so we wanted to introduce you to the important people for Third Year Geography. You can contact us at any time by email, on Microsoft Teams or by phone, and we are happy to meet you during office hours or by appointment.

Head of Department

Dr Stephen McCarron Stephen.McCarron@mu.ie 01-708 6147 R-23B

Deputy Head of Department

Dr Adrian Kavanagh Adrian.P.Kavanagh@mu.ie 01-708 6014 R-6

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Director of Student Success

Dr Adrian Kavanagh Adrian.P.Kavanagh@mu.ie 01-708 6014 R-6

Single Major Co-ordinator

Dr Alistair Fraser Alistair.Fraser@mu.ie 01-708 6156 R-21

Staff involved in Third Year Geography

Name	Email	Phone	Office	Modules
Prof Mark Boyle	Mark.G.Boyle@mu.ie	01-708 3756	R-22	GY305
Dr Patrick Bresnihan	Patrick.Bresnihan@mu.ie	01-708 3756	R-18	GY319A
Dr. Conor Cahalane	conor.cahalane@mu.ie	01-708 3748	R-7	GY314
Dr Ronan Foley	Ronan.Foley@mu.ie	01-708 6024	R-12	GY304, GY336
Dr Alistair Fraser	Alistair.Fraser@mu.ie	01-708 6156	R-21	GY303; GY306; GY333
Dr Adrian Kavanagh	Adrian.P.Kavanagh@mu.ie	01-708 6014	R-6	GY305; GY310B; GY347
Dr Carla Kayanan	Carla.Kayanan@mu.ie			GY332
Prof Gerry Kearns	Gerry.Kearns@mu.ie	01-708 6153	R-24	GY337
Dr Gerard McCarthy	Gerard.McCarthy@mu.ie	01-708 6550	L-2.7	GY369
Prof Conor Murphy	Conor.Murphy@mu.ie	01-708 3494	L-2.6	GY313

Dr Carla Sa Ferreira	Carla.SaFerreira@mu.ie			GY308A; GY317; GY367
Dr Martina Roche	Martina.J.Roche@mu.ie	01-708 4566	R-59	GY326
Dr Nick Scroxton	Nick.Scroxton@mu.ie			GY308A
Prof Karen Till	Karen.Till@mu.ie	01-708 4550	R-19	GY339
Dr Chris Van Egeraat	Chris.vanegeraat@mu.ie	01-708 4714	R-10	GY321; GY330; GY399A; GY399B

R=Rhetoric House (South Campus)

L=Laraghbryan House (North Campus)

I=Iontas Building (North Campus)

You can find out about all other staff in the Department of Geography on our staff webpage: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/geography/our-people>

3. Programme Structure

In Third Year, we have a wide range of modules for you to choose from so that you can specialise in particular aspects of Geography. Here, we provide details of the different degree options and structures; then we give some information on the different modules that are available this year.

You will have chosen to study Geography in one the following ways:

- As a **Single Major** (60 credits/ECTS)
- As a **Major** (40 credits/ECTS)
- As a **Double Major** (30 credits/ECTS)
- As a **Minor** (20 credits/ECTS)
- As part of **MH203** [Biological and Geographical Sciences] (25/30 credits/ECTS)

Each degree option has different requirements (see the table below).

In addition, Single Major students can request to take up to 10 credits/ECTS and Major/Double Major students can request to take 5 credits/ECTS outside this regular degree structure. If you are considering this, you should complete the relevant R.7 form (see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/registry/registry-forms>) and get the permission of the Head of Department.

	Module	Code	ECTS	Single Major (60 ECTS)	Major (40 ECTS)	Double Major (30 ECTS)	Minor (20 ECTS)	MH203 (20/30 ECTS)
SEMESTER 1	Geographical Information Systems	GY304	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✓
	Approaches to Human Geography	GY305	5	✓	⊙	⊙	⊙	✗
	Literature Review and Thesis Preparation	GY306	5	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
	Climate Change	GY313	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	Global Ecosystems Pressures and Sustainability	GY317	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	Geographies of Waste	GY319A	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	Geography of the Informational Economy	GY321	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✗
	Geopolitics: Power and Space	GY337	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✗
	The City in Film	GY339	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✗
	Oceanography	GY369	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	Geography Work Placement	GY399A	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✗

	Module	Code	ECTS	Single Major (60 ECTS)	Major (40 ECTS)	Double Major (30 ECTS)	Minor (20 ECTS)	MH203 (20/30 ECTS)
S	Thesis	GY303	10	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗

Field Methods for Geography and Ecology	GY308A	5	✘	✘	✘	✘	✓
Geography Research Workshop	GY310B	5	✘	✓	✓	✘	✘
Fluvial Geomorphology	GY312	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Environmental Remote Sensing	GY314	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Medical Geography	GY326	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Regional Planning and Development	GY330	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✘
Smart Cities	GY332	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✘
Global Foodscapes	GY333	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Culture, Health and Place	GY336	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✘
Electoral Geography	GY347	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✘
Paleoecology	GY367	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Geography Work Placement	GY399B	5	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	✘

- ✓ means the module is **required** for this degree option
- ✘ means the module is **not available** for this degree option
- ⊙ means the module is **optional** for the degree option
- ☆ means the module **may be available** for this degree option. Check with the module coordinator.

Modules outside the regular programme/subject

Single Major students can request to take up to 10 credits/ECTS and Major/Double Major students can request to take 5 credits/ECTS outside this regular degree structure. If you are considering this, you should complete the relevant R.7 form (see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/registry/registry-forms>) and get the permission of the Head of Department of Geography.

Semester 1 Modules

Required:
MH203

GY304 Geographical Information Systems and Science (Staff: Ronan Foley)

Students will develop a basic understanding of GI Science concepts and gain experience in the applied use of industry-standard GIS software. The course will be delivered through a mix of lectures and laboratory practicals. Core concepts associated with GI Science, including digital data structures, co-ordinate systems, geo-referencing, raster modelling and neo-geographies will be introduced and discussed. GIS software, specifically ArcGIS v10 will be used with the students to develop their practical skills and knowledge of data identification, creation, querying and fundamental GIS analysis.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment;

Required:
Single
Major

GY305 Approaches to Human Geography (Staff: Adrian Kavanagh, Mark Boyle)

This module will study the historical development of geography as an academic discipline and the social, political and historical contexts in which the subject developed. It will study how the development of geography has been shaped by different philosophical and theoretical approaches, and also analyse how these different schools of geography may approach specific topics or themes in geography in different ways. This module also aims to develop students' critical skills in terms of developing critiques of the different approaches taken to Geography, and aims to offer students theoretical frameworks to draw from, so as to provide them with a sound basis to build geographical research on.

Assessment: 66.67% Continuous Assessment; 33.33% University Scheduled Written Examination (1 hour)

Single
Majors
only

GY306 Literature Review and Thesis Presentation (Staff: Alistair Fraser)

Students are required to write a critical review of the published literature relating to their chosen thesis topic. The literature review should not only summarise the existing literature but should ideally identify research questions to be empirically tested based upon debates and disagreements within the literature. Students will also be required to make a presentation based upon the literature, identifying the research questions and outlining the methodology that they intend to use to address these questions.

Module objectives: (1) To build upon students' existing knowledge to identify suitable research questions. (2) To write a review of the existing literature on their chosen topic. (3) To provide further experience on making a public presentation.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY313 Climate Change (Staff: Conor Murphy)

Within the lifespan of the present generation, global climate is expected to change more radically than at any time over the past several thousand years. The primary cause of this is increasingly recognised as being due to human activities in altering the composition of the atmosphere, particularly as a consequence of interfering with long wave radiative transfers as a result of increasing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. How big and how rapid the climatic changes resulting from this are likely to be are of acute concern for the entire global community and are the subjects of major research efforts world-wide. This module addresses the causes and consequences of climate change. It examines how various techniques enable a longer term perspective on climate to be obtained. It examines how past and present climatic fluctuations can be seen to have social, economic and political consequences which technological advances have not eliminated and may even have exacerbated. The implications of modelling-based projections of the enhanced greenhouse effect for Ireland and other parts of the world will be analysed, as will options to mitigate future global warming.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY317 Global Ecosystem Pressures and Sustainability (Staff: Carla Sa Ferreira)

Growing pressures on the natural environment through intensification of human land use may compromise ecosystem functions that are central to both the human and the natural world. According to the UN commissioned Millennium Ecosystem Assessment report published in 2004, 60% of ecosystem services were degraded or used unsustainably. More recent State of the Environment reports show continuing threats to ecosystems. This module examines rising ecosystem pressures focusing particularly on intensification of anthropogenic land use and projected demands in future output. It explores effects of these pressures on ecosystems. Questions asked include: What changes can these 'stressors' cause in wild population structure and biodiversity, and how might they ultimately affect such ecosystem services like water purification, food production, biological pest control, pollination, soil conservation and carbon sequestration? We end by examining case studies and examples of better management of ecosystems for a sustainable future.

Assessment: 50% Continuous Assessment; 50% University Scheduled Written Examination (1 hour)

GY319A Geographies of Waste (Staff: Patrick Bresnihan)

Waste: (of a material, substance, or by-product) eliminated or discarded as no longer useful or required after the completion of a process. From plastics to food to carbon emissions, the global economy generates vast quantities and diverse forms of waste. Much of this accumulates in the ocean, land, atmosphere, as well as in human and non-human bodies. Microplastics circulate in the depths of the oceans and the cells of microorganisms; residues of radioactive material released in the 1950s lace the surface of the planet; smog produced from rapidly expanding cities slowly kills millions of people every day; vast shipping containers that can't compete with larger, faster ships, end up on the shores of Bangladesh to be taken apart by shipbreakers. This is the Anthropocene, a purportedly new geological epoch demarcated by the planetary effects of human activity. While waste may be everywhere it does not affect everyone equally. As the long history of environmental (in)justice attests, the risks and burdens associated with toxic pollution and waste disposal are disproportionately experienced by racial minorities, workers, the poor, indigenous, and the Global South. Drawing on the critical traditions of discard studies, political ecology, and science and technology studies, this module will provide students with a critical understanding of waste, its uneven geographies, and its intimate connections with broader political and economic systems. The course will examine: the economics of waste and the waste economy; the role of scientific expertise, including citizen science, in the classification and management of waste and pollution; and the ethical and political challenges that contemporary society faces in a context of unprecedented quantities and qualities of waste.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY321 Geography of the Informational Economy (Staff: Chris Van Egeraat)

Since the 1970s the capitalist world is undergoing a systemic change from an industrial economy to an informational/knowledge economy, in which productivity is based on information derived from advances in new information and communication technologies. This module sets out to analyse this transition and its social, economic and spatial effects. Core topics include: the nature of the informational economy; the production and use of information technology; the evolution of the Internet; business networks and their geographies; information-based producer and consumer services (notably recent developments such as Facebook, Twitter and cloud computing); socio-spatial polarisation in the informational economy; ICT and rural development; the impact of the informational economy on Ireland.

Assessment: 33.33% Continuous Assessment; 66.67% University Scheduled Written Examination (2 hours)

GY337 Geopolitics (Staff: Gerry Kearns)

This course will examine the relations between power and space at a variety of scales. It will have three main areas. First, the Political Geography of Ireland and its place in colonial and postcolonial worlds. Second, the geopolitics of race in the United States. And, finally, the global geopolitics of the Cold War and the New World Order that has replaced it. The central concepts of the course will be scale, race, colonialism, postcolonialism, power, exclusion, and imperialism.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY339 The City in Film (Staff: Karen Till)

Films reflect the remarkable changes in urban life that have occurred since the turn of the twentieth century and represent the promises and failures of globalisation, urban development, and living with strangers. As an aesthetic form, film emerged at the turn of the last century and soon became a new way of representing the built environment and imagining urban form. As early as the 1920s, film also reflected urban theories and influenced planning practices in many countries. As a social scene, cinema created a viewing public through a shared leisure experience ('going to the movies') and urban form (the movie house on main street or in the mall). Visions of the modern city also reflect (and sometimes reinforce) societal desires and fears. Stage sets, digital imagery, sound, lighting, and stories about contemporary and futuristic cities depict both idealistic utopian hopes for socially just and beautiful worlds, as well as fears of 'the Other' (aliens, foreigners, nature, women, persons of colour), of unchecked government power or of corrupt corporate control. In this module, students will view and discuss films from 1908 to the present produced and viewed in multiple countries, with a focus on European countries and the U.S. Students will gain an understanding of such themes as: urban aesthetics, design, and planning; urban form and technology; social and cultural conflict in cities; political and economic processes tied to urbanisation (including colonialism, globalisation, real estate development, deindustrialisation); changing racial and gender relationships; and utopian and dystopian views of urban futures.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY369 Oceanography (Staff: Gerard McCarthy)

Over 70% of the earth's surface is covered by oceans giving earth the name 'The Blue Planet'. The oceans contain 97% of the world's water and produces 50% of the world's oxygen—that's every other breath you take. Since the 1950s, over 90% of the excess heat trapped in the atmosphere predominantly by man-made greenhouse gases has been stored in the ocean—in other words, 'global warming' could as accurately be described as 'ocean warming'. Understanding the oceans is key to understanding how the Earth works. This course is designed for those who are interested in a holistic understanding of the ocean but who don't have a scientific background. The course will discuss a range of fundamental topics, including ocean currents, sea level, primary production and carbon in the ocean, and look at selected special topics in more detail, including plastics in the ocean and Ireland's ocean: the northeast Atlantic.

Assessment: 33.33% Continuous Assessment; 66.67% University Scheduled Written Examination (2 hours)

GY399A Geography Work Placement (Semester 1) (Staff: Chris Van Egeraat)

This module allows a student to apply and enhance their geographic knowledge and skills in an external working environment (outside Maynooth University). The academic supervisor will visit the workplace whilst the placement is in progress. The placement should be identified by the student and discussed with, and approved by, the module coordinator before the work placement can commence. Students who would like to register for GY399A need to contact the module coordinator to discuss this, and get approval for this, a few months in advance of the start of Semester 1. Students who are approved to

register for this module will not initially be able to register for when online registrations commence in early September, but their GY399A registration details will be sorted out by the Department during the first few weeks of Semester 1.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

Semester 2 Modules

Single
Majors
only

GY303 Thesis (Staff: Alistair Fraser)

Preparation of thesis consisting of 10,000-12,000 words on a research topic approved by a member of the Department's academic staff.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

Required:
MH203
only

GY308A Field Methods for Geography and Ecology (Staff: Nick Scroton and Carla Sa Ferreira)

Physical geography and Ecology are inherently field based sciences. The concepts and ideas connecting the two subject will be explored in this field trip. The module offers a behind-the-scenes look at the human impacts, physical conditions and processes that drive habitat patterns in the landscape and habitat condition. You will learn skills in how to do Geography. The module combines hands-on experience in collecting data and observing and understanding landscape processes. We will guide you through some of the basic techniques in preparation for your own research project in fourth year, and for work beyond university. The module will run as a week-long field course in conjunction with BI303.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

Required:
Major
Double Major
ONLY

GY310B Geography Research Workshop (Staff: Adrian Kavanagh and others)

The aim of this module is to provide students, working both individually and in teams, with skills relating to research design, academic report writing and oral presentation, as well as critical assessment, academic argument, while working within the context of small group setting with a dedicated staff tutor. Each tutorial group will work to a broad work schedule set by the tutor, involving a mid-module group presentation and a c.5,000 word individual research report (to be submitted before the conclusion of the tutorials), as well as other small tutorial exercises set by the tutor. Students **MUST** sign up for a tutorial group/option during Semester 1 (sign ups normally commence (via the GY310B Moodle page) in October or November). Further details on tutorial group/project options (and how to sign up for these) will made be available on the GY310B Moodle page and by the module coordinator ahead of, and during, Semester 1.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY310B Geography Research Workshops run in Semester 2. In the middle of Semester 1, you will be asked to choose one of around 10-12 options in the GY310B sign-up process: each option will have a specific geographical project theme and meeting time. We will provide more information on GY310B early in Semester 1, by email and on the GY310B Moodle page. If you do not have access to the GY310B Moodle page by end-October, or if you haven't completed registration, please contact Adrian Kavanagh as soon as possible. GY310B groups commence in the first week of Semester 2. Weekly GY310B tutorial meetings run for one hour each week during Semester 2. Attendance is compulsory

GY312 Fluvial Geomorphology (Staff: TBC)

This course begins by examining the environmental factors that control river channel equilibrium and form. The processes by which channel adjustment occurs in response to changes in these controlling factors are then considered through the investigation of different fluvial environments and the evidence for historical channel changes. Several related themes are covered including the unintentional effects human activities have on channel form and ways in which river channels can be effectively managed through understanding and working in harmony with the fluvial system.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY314 Environmental Remote Sensing (Staff: Conor Cahalane)

Remote sensing involves receiving, understanding and interpreting information about the Earth from a distance, usually by analysing satellite images. The module provides an introduction to the theory behind different types of imagery, training in the analysis of this imagery and simple digital image processing techniques.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

GY326 Medical Geography (Staff: Martina Roche)

This module explores issues relating to the environmental and social causes of human disease. It considers the importance of Geography in the context of medical/health data and the uses of and challenges involved with using such data. It considers the various ways that environment influences health, including the relationship between early life exposures and disease in later life. It considers the social, political and economic contexts for various disease patterns across the globe and their implications. It reflects on the relationship between poverty, inequality and health and examines the role of social capital, in this regard.

Assessment: 66.67% Continuous Assessment; 33.33% University Scheduled Written Examination (1 hour)

GY330 Regional Planning and Development (Staff: Chris Van Egeraat)

Why do people living in Donegal enjoy lower levels of wealth than people living in Dublin and what can be done to address this? The module aims to give students a thorough understanding of the processes driving unbalanced regional development and related regional development policies and planning strategies. Core topics of the module include: changing perspectives on what constitutes regional development; the evolution of theories of regional development; regional development policies and instruments; the role of indigenous and multinational companies. The module will focus specifically on regional development problems and policies in Ireland, notably the impact of the Celtic Tiger, the current economic crisis and Ireland's National Planning Framework.

Assessment: 33.33% Continuous Assessment; 66.67% University Scheduled Written Examination (2 hours)

GY332 Smart Cities (Staff: Carla Kayanan)

For the past three decades, digital technologies and systems – such as city operating systems, centralized control rooms, digitally-mediated surveillance, intelligent transport systems, predictive policing, coordinated emergency response, bikeshare, sensor networks, smart lighting, building management systems and civic apps – have become ever more important for the management and economy of cities. Collectively these systems are sold and used on the promise of creating a smart city; a city that uses real-time data and computation to create more efficient, effective, productive, competitive, safer, and sustainable urban life. This module will explore how smart cities are being produced around the world, the logic and drivers underpinning the smart city movement, the critique being levelled against state- and corporate-led visions of the smart city, and the merits of alternative citizen-centric visions. Along with an extensive discussion of core ideas and concepts, the module will provide plenty of illustrative case material relating to specific technologies and places.

The course will provide a detailed analysis:

- (1) of smart cities and its key ideas, rationale, and technologies;
- (2) how the smart city serves the state, businesses and citizens;
- (3) the key critiques of the drive to create smart cities;
- (4) an assessment of the present state of play and how smart cities might be alternatively realised.

Assessment: 50% Continuous Assessment; 50% University Scheduled Written Examination (1 hour)

GY333 Global Foodscapes (Staff: Alistair Fraser)

This module examines multiple dimensions of dramatic changes in the way food is produced and consumed. The module pays attention to the impact of globalization on food production, distribution, and consumption. Key processes are identified, theorized, and explained. Case study materials are drawn from 'first' and 'third' world contexts. A range of theoretical perspectives will be introduced, evaluated, and critiqued during the module.

Assessment: 33.3% Continuous Assessment; 66.7% University Scheduled Written Examination (2 hours)

GY336 Culture, Health and Place (Staff: Ronan Foley)

The aim of this module is to explore some of the critical questions facing health care systems and the contribution which geography can make to understanding how such systems are structured and delivered. The module is split into two connected sections. The first discusses different international health care system models and then considers the Irish health care system and how it compares. The second section focuses on key discussions around the planning of health care services; emphasising inequalities associated with access, utilisation and deprivation and how these in turn are shaped by wider system structures.

Assessment: 33.33% Continuous Assessment; 66.67% University Scheduled Written Examination (2 hours)

GY347 Electoral Geography (Staff: Adrian Kavanagh)

This module introduces students to the key themes and debates in electoral geography and the recent literature in this field. It will offer a cogent argument as to why geography and geographical concepts (such as space and place) matter when it comes to explaining political behaviour and in particular electoral behaviour. This module will draw on examples from the Irish and the international context. Key themes to be covered during this module include:

- Electoral systems and how these are expressed in terms of geographical patterns of support both for "major" political parties and for "minor" parties and the levels of proportionality/disproportionality associated with different political systems
- How political parties "use geography" to organise themselves and to maximise their representation levels based on current/expected levels of support
- The shaping of electoral boundaries and how these may impact on the ability of political parties to translate given support levels into parliamentary seat numbers/representation levels, with specific reference to current/past examples of gerrymandering
- The geographical dimensions of "under representation" in political systems with specific reference to different demographic and social groups (e.g. females, younger voters, working class voters, ethnic minorities) - what are the causes and the implications of this, and what measures can be undertaken to increase the representation of these groups

Assessment: 66.67% Continuous Assessment; 33.33% University Scheduled Written Examination (1 hour)

GY367 Paleoecology (Staff: Carla Sa Ferreira)

We are aware that the ecological environment is changing and that humans are the cause of much of that change; however, our perspective of human driven environmental change is often very recent. A longer-term perspective is vital as change has been ongoing throughout the Holocene. We will explore such questions as: What impact did hunter gatherers have on megaherbivores such as the woolly mammoth? What were the impacts of the first farmers? Did these early impacts change climate as well as ecology? How did medieval and post medieval human populations change landscapes and what did this mean for biodiversity? The first part of this module will focus on long-term ecological change via palaeoecological approaches. We will examine and critique how we use pollen and other microfossils to investigate ecological and environmental change in the last c.11,700 years of the Holocene Epoch. We

will then examine the major ecological changes that have taken place, developing an understanding of both natural and human-driven changes in the landscape. We will discuss the impact of understanding our past to managing our future by examining the implications of palaeoecological results for climate change, nature conservation, land management options, and proposals for rewilding.

Assessment: 50% Continuous Assessment; 50% Examination

GY399B Geography Work Placement (Semester 2) (Staff: Chris Van Egeraat)

This module allows a student to apply and enhance their geographic knowledge and skills in an external working environment (outside Maynooth University). The academic supervisor will visit the workplace whilst the placement is in progress. The placement should be identified by the student and discussed with, and approved by, the module coordinator before the work placement can commence.

Students who would like to register for GY399A need to contact the module coordinator to discuss this, and get approval for this, a few months in advance of the start of Semester 1. Students who are approved to register for this module will not initially be able to register for when online registrations commence in early September, but their GY399A registration details will be sorted out by the Department during the first few weeks of Semester 1.

Assessment: 100% Continuous Assessment

4. After Third Year

Further Study

We hope you enjoy your experience in Third Year Geography, and that it has made you interested in further study in Geography. These are the **postgraduate degrees** we currently offer, and we will arrange information sessions during the year so you can learn more about these options for further study. Feel free to chat to any of your lecturers about these and other postgraduate programmes.

[MA Geography](#): Deepen your understanding of human geography while also significantly enhancing your professional skills.

[MA Spatial Justice](#): Examine the geographical dimensions of justice through unique public engagement opportunities with civil society partners and cutting-edge research modules.

[MSc Climate Change](#): Secure an advanced knowledge of climate change, climate change modelling, impact assessment, and potential mitigation strategies in an Irish context.

[MSc GIS and Remote Sensing](#): Enhance your knowledge of GIS and Remote Sensing and your capacity to apply technology to collect and analyse spatial data sets.

[MLitt and PhD](#): Carry out original research on a geographic topic under the supervision of staff members.

Academic References

Whether you choose further study in Geography, in other subjects, or take up employment, you may need an academic reference. We are always happy to support you by providing an academic reference. It's best if you ask someone who knows you, such as your GY310B tutor or your GY303 supervisor, or any staff member you've taken classes with. If we know you, we can write a more comprehensive reference.

If you need an academic reference, here are the steps you should follow:

- First, ask the staff member if you can list them as a referee
- If the staff member agrees, you should complete the [Reference Disclaimer Form](#) and send them:
 - an up-to-date copy of your professional curriculum vitae (CV)
 - all relevant details on the course/job that you are applying for and
 - details on how/to where the reference letter should be submitted.

Make sure you give the staff member enough notice. See the document 'References from the Geography Department' on the MC:GY_03 Moodle page for further information.

5. Resources for Student Success

Your final year as an undergraduate is important in terms of your final degree result and your preparation for work or further study thereafter. In this section of the course manual, we want to highlight important information to help you do as well as possible in the final year of your undergraduate degree.

You will find all this information on our [webpage](#) and on Moodle.

1. Keeping in touch with the Department of Geography

You can keep in touch with the Department of Geography on Moodle, by email, by Microsoft Teams, during drop in/office hours, and through the Department of Geography website. Click [here](#) for a quick guide on how to communicate with staff in the Department.

Drop-in/office hours are times that your lecturers have reserved for you. They are the best time to contact your lecturer for a quick chat about any questions or concerns you have. Every lecturer has drop-in/office hours every week, so we encourage you to use them.

2. Using Moodle

Moodle is the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) used by Maynooth University. We use Moodle to provide information about each year of study, and about each individual module. You can learn more about using Moodle [here](#). Each of your modules has its own Moodle page, and there is also a Moodle page for [Third Year Geography](#)

3. Using Microsoft Teams

Maynooth University uses Microsoft Teams, and so you will have access to Teams: you can use it to send a message to your lecturer or classmates, to set up online meetings, and to attend online meetings, tutorials and lectures (if necessary). You can learn more about Microsoft Teams [here](#).

4. How to do well in Assignments

Your lecturers will give you detailed instructions on assignments. You should read these carefully and follow them closely. Sometimes, lecturers will provide you with 'grade-related criteria': this gives information on what is expected if you are to be awarded a particular grade. If the instructions or grade-related criteria are not clear to you, you can contact your lecturer to ask for clarification. Make sure you are fully familiar with academic standards of referencing and citation, and how to avoid plagiarism and collusion.

The Department of Geography policy is that, unless a member of the teaching staff explicitly gives you permission for a specific assignment, you are not permitted to use '**generative AI**' software or services (such as Chat-GPT) to create any text, in part or full, for any of your assignments. Failure to follow this ruling will be considered, and treated as, plagiarism. In line with university policy, where there is any suspicion of plagiarism, the examiner will have the opportunity to examine the student in an oral examination, which will then be a compulsory part of the examination process for that student.

Click [here](#) for *The Reference Point*, and click [here](#) to learn more about plagiarism and collusion.

We understand that life is complicated, and sometimes you may miss an assignment deadline or tutorial or examination, or you may be unable to attend class. Because of this, we have set up a system called **Personal and Medical Circumstances (PMC)**, which you **should** use if you have missed deadlines, classes or are experiencing other issues that are making it difficult for you to do your best. Click [here](#) for more information about the PMC system, including how to submit a PMC form.

5. Marks and Standards

'Marks and Standards' is the term Maynooth University uses to indicate what you need to pass a year of study, and what grade you will be awarded. You can learn more about marks and standards for the University by clicking this [link](#). You can learn about 'grade-related criteria' in the Department of Geography [here](#).

6. Using the Library

The Library has a wide range of study spaces for you to work on your own or with others. It has resources that include laptops, books, journals – some physical, some online – and it has a range of tutorials and training courses to help you find the support you need for your studies. Your MyCard (student card) gives you access to the library and allows you to borrow material, and you can also access library resources off campus by logging in.

To get familiar with the Library, you should explore the Library homepage: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library>; and sign up for [LIST \(Library & Information Skills Tutorials\)](#). You should also check out the Subject guide for Geography: <https://nuim.libguides.com/geography>

7. University Resources

We wanted to highlight the different supports that Maynooth University provides to help you during your time here. There are two types of support that are available to all students: Academic Supports; and Student Supports.

Academic Supports

- The [Academic Advisory Office](#) provides general help for students who are encountering difficulties. You can email advisory.office@mu.ie or completing the enquiry form [here](#)
- The [Programme Advisory Office](#) helps students with programme-related decisions. The email is programme.choices@mu.ie
- The [Maths Support Centre](#) offers help with Maths to undergraduate students. Check out the services and resources available [here](#).
- The [Writing Centre](#) offers help with writing to any students. You can make an individual appointment by emailing writing.centre@mu.ie

Student Supports

Student Services offers a wide range of supports from their base in the Student Services Building on the North Campus. The full range of supports is detailed on their [website](#).

- To make an individual appointment with the Student Support Officer, email student.support@mu.ie or click [here](#)
- The Student Counselling Service has self-help resources and information on making an appointment with a counsellor on its [website](#).
- Information about the Health Centre, including how to make an appointment, is available [here](#).
- You can book an appointment with the Student Budgeting Advice Service [here](#); you can also find out about the Student Assistance Fund, laptop and emergency loans and other financial supports.
- Learn about the supports and resources provided by the Chaplaincy [here](#).

In addition, there is specific support for particular groups of students, including International Students, Mature Students, HEAR and DARE students, and Maynooth Access Programme students. The 2022/23 Access representative for the Department of Geography is Dr. Conor Cahalane (see contact info in Section 2).

8. Getting involved with the Department of Geography

There are lots of opportunities for you to get involved in the Department of Geography, such as the Geography Society and the Staff-Student Committee. Find out about these opportunities [here](#).

9. Careers in Geography

A degree in Geography opens up all kinds of possible careers. We've prepared a guide on careers for Geography graduates, and you can access it [here](#). You can also read about the diverse careers of (just some) of our Maynooth Geography graduates here: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/daro/our-graduates>

10. What to do if you have a problem?

[In this guide](#), we provide information on what to do if you have a problem that we in the Department of Geography can help with.

11. Athena Swan

The Athena Swan Charter is a national strategy to promote gender equality in higher education and was launched in Ireland by the Higher Education Authority in 2015. The Department of Geography has committed itself to the Athena Swan process. You can read more about Athena Swan in the Department of Geography [here](#)