

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: **Global Governmentality: Roads, Infrastructure, & Community Management**

Course Number and Section

GSI

3529F 550

Instructor Name(s): Dr. Mark Franke

Instructor Email(s): mfranke@huron.uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL Brightspace is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

As a way of introducing the everydayness and ubiquity of governmentality, this particular course focuses on the example of how we can recognise, examine, critically analyse, and find ways of challenging the workings of governmentality through one of the most common sets of material systems developed by modern states and interstate arrangements: roads, infrastructure, and community management.

Much of the modern world is transformed through its penetration with roadways, networks of transportation routes, and infrastructure of multiple kinds that invite and facilitate the movement of human beings in specific ways toward pre-established ends. In this regard, the modern world may appear to be "opened" with transportation infrastructure that gives human beings the supposed freedom to move around in and engage and form relations with others as they please, on vast scales. However, it is important to recognise that roads and the infrastructure to support roads are never neutral but, rather, condition the movement of human beings in highly specific ways. Roads incite specific ideas of freedom and practices of self-determination, but in very limited and contained ways. As a result, a key contention of this entire course is that we can see how states, corporations, and inter-state arrangements with corporations have learned to deploy roads and infrastructure in ways that communities around the world may be managed through self-management of their own mobilities, in support of interests, values, and goals that are fashioned in the very materials of the roads and infrastructure themselves. Roads are studied as grounds of governmentality.

Learning Outcomes: one outcome per entry

Students in this course will learn the theory of governmentality and what is implied about governmentality socially. Most specifically, though, students will learn how governmentality may be produced and applied across the human-built environment around them, specifically in terms of the material environment established for transportation and mobilities. Students will learn how the supposed norms of modern human economic activity, citizenship, and social relations, especially as conditioned by globalisation, may be and are incited through specific material constructions. And students will learn how they and others may and are responding critically to these incitements with their own innovative actions in addressing existing infrastructure and producing the possibility for alternative conduits of movement and built environments for their societies.

Through these studies, students will learn to apply theories and critical analyses of governmentality to the built environment around them, locally, and learn how to make deep connections between the governmentality incited in local roads and infrastructure with larger roadways and infrastructure projects in other parts of the world.

Students in this course will gain opportunities to improve their skills in reading, analysis, interpretation, research, writing, and public communication of ideas.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Many of the readings are articles selected from a wide variety of academic journals. These articles will be available as pdfs on the course BrightSpace page.

Other readings are drawn from the following books, each of which are available for purchase at the Western University Bookstore:

- Patrick Joyce. *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City*. (Verso, 2003). \$42.75 or free via Reserve Library Loan.

- Luke Heslop & Galen Murton, eds.. *Highways and Hierarchies: Ethnographies of Mobility from the Himalaya to the Indian Ocean*. (Routledge, 2021). \$tbd or free from Library online copy

- Penny Harvey & Hannah Knox. *Roads: An Anthropology of Infrastructure and Expertise*. (Cornell University Press, 2015). \$53.00 or free online from the Library

- Nikhil Anand, Akhil Gupta, & Hannah Appel, eds. *The Promise of Infrastructure*. (Duke University Press, 2018). \$tbd or free online from the Library

Methods of Evaluation: one assignment per entry

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
participation	ongoing	13%
eight Critical Reading Studies	ongoing	32%
Local Road/Infrastructure Analysis	October 30, 2026	15%
Research Paper	December 9, 2026	40%

Thursday, August 6, 2026

Huron Brief Course Outline 2026/27

In-course Costs \$000.00

For Textbooks and Course Materials (below), you are required to include the cost of each textbook or other learning material.

Note whether there are any restrictions that would prevent a student from using a second-hand copy. Here is some suggested text:

- Required textbook: [author, title, edition, publisher, date]. Cost: [insert amount].
 - Or include the weblink of the textbook's publisher site that includes the cost information.
- Students need to purchase this edition. Second-hand or older editions will not be sufficient.
- OR Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook.
- This course has an optional field trip that costs [insert amount].
- This course has a required field component that costs [insert amount].

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.