



## **New Geographical Theories and Methodologies Geography Graduate School Intensive Course**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> - Friday 6<sup>th</sup>, November 2009  
Department of Geography, University of Oulu**

The past decade or so has witnessed some important developments in geographical thinking, theories and methodologies and in the roles of both qualitative and quantitative methods. A re-orientation has taken place in both physical and human geography. There are a variety of both intellectual and material backgrounds for such tendencies. In human geography e.g. globalization and the increasing sensitiveness to environmental issues have had an impact on a number of research themes, from border studies to tourism research, from economic geography to human/nature relations. In human geography both qualitative and quantitative methods are widely used and their use becomes more and more nuanced. Respectively in physical geography the development of research methods and new approaches to map and explain the complexities of global change, together with more traditional but perpetually significant research themes such as geomorphology, have been important backgrounds for current research.

This intensive course will concentrate on the issues of methodology and theory (see details on themes below). The course will consist of lectures, student presentations and discussions. This course provides an excellent opportunity for doctoral students to get feedback from international and Finnish specialists

Visiting lecturers in human geography are Professor Martin Jones (University of Aberystwyth, UK) and Professor Theano Terkenli (University of Aegean, Greece) and the event will be organized by Anssi Paasi together with Kaj Zimmerbauer and Joni Vainikka. The lecture on current issues in physical geography will be given by professor Miska Luoto who organises physical geography sessions together with Henna Sormunen.

Students may present papers in the event and can get feedback on their ongoing research work. Doctoral students in physical geography willing to participate the event should send their abstracts to Miska Luoto ([miska.luoto@oulu.fi](mailto:miska.luoto@oulu.fi), tel. 08-5531704) or Henna Sormunen ([henna.sormunen@oulu.fi](mailto:henna.sormunen@oulu.fi), tel. 5537846) and students in human geography to Anssi Paasi ([anssi.paasi@oulu.fi](mailto:anssi.paasi@oulu.fi), tel. 08-5531703) or Kaj Zimmerbauer ([kaj.zimmerbauer@oulu.fi](mailto:kaj.zimmerbauer@oulu.fi), tel. 08-5531712) or [joni.vainikka@oulu.fi](mailto:joni.vainikka@oulu.fi), tel. 5537847).

Deadline for the abstracts (250words) is Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2009. The final programme will be delivered soon after that.

## **Changing concepts and methodologies in human geography**

**Traditional geographical concepts such as region or place have been increasingly related to such categories as scale or network and a lively debate has been going on during the last decade or so on the relations of such categories. Similarly traditional ideas on landscape have been problematized in many ways and developed further to take both the visual, symbolic and material dimensions as well as power relations into account. These tendencies have been partly related to such major challenges as economic and cultural globalization and global changes in natural systems.**

**This intensive course will concentrate particularly on recent and ongoing theoretical debates on geographical concepts and approaches and their backgrounds as well as recent developments in research methods. These are issues that are significant to most research projects in human geography**

## **Spatial analysis and statistics in physical geography**

**Knowledge of the spatial distributions and dynamics of earth surface processes, biota and the underlying environmental factors affecting them has a fundamental role in physical geography. However, data on the distribution of different processes, landforms and species are often scarce and can be difficult to acquire. One potential means to complement the insufficient information concerning the distribution of different phenomena and suitable physical environments for them is provided by spatial modelling.**

**In the context of global change research modelling has a key position as a predictive instrument. During the past two decades there has been a large effort to determine the likely impacts of anthropogenic climate change for natural systems. Many models describing the behaviour of systems or activities in different environments have been developed, tested and applied for evaluating the potential impacts of climate change. Consequently, the development of spatial analysis and modelling methods has become one of the key issues in physical geography and global change studies. Spatial analysis and statistics in physical geography - intensive course will focus on novel spatial analysis and modelling methods in physical geography, particularly in biogeography and geomorphology. Additionally, all presentations concerning the change of natural systems are warmly welcome.**