

Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research

Women's Studies 3312F
Gender and the Environment
Winter 2019

Instructor: David Huebert

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Office hours: Wednesday, 2:00-4:00 pm

Course Location: FNB 1270

Course Date/Time: Wednesdays: 10:30-1:30

Course Description

Queer ecologies, ecofeminism, toxic masculinity, the straight white (m)Anthropocene. Through theory, literature, and film, this course will explore the often problematic and largely under-examined intersections of gender and environmentalism. Our course texts will include feminist critiques of mainstream science, memoirs and graphic novels articulating the literally toxic masculinities of Alberta oil labour, and science fiction depicting speculative futures of environment, sexuality, and gender. Some of the course's questions: What are the gendered undercurrents of green political discourse? How are modern constructions of gender shaped by our age of ecological emergency? How do we extend human gender regimes onto nonhuman life and how does animal sexuality affect our performances and constructions of gender? How do race, gender, and class intersect in environmental conversations?

Prerequisites: Women's Studies 2220e or Women's Studies 2273E or permission of the department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Learning Objectives:

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Engage thoughtfully with key debates surrounding gender and the environment.
- Develop working definitions of the key terms "environment," "environmentalism," and "ecology" in the context of feminism and gender theory.
- Produce oral and written analyses of literature, theory, and film in the context.
- Become active and informed interpreters of environmental and ecological discourses and how such discourses intersect with gender.
- Collaborate with colleagues through composition workshops and in-class discussion.
- Orally present critical insights in front of an audience of peers.
- Propose, conceive, and produce a coherent and carefully argued research essay, incorporating feedback from instructor.

Course Materials

Primary Texts (available at campus bookstore):

Sherilyn MacGregor, *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment*

Octavia Butler, *Lilith's Brood*

*Additional digital readings will be distributed by OWL.

Methods of Evaluation

Attendance and Participation:	10%
Midterm:	20%
Presentation:	15%
Final Essay:	25%
Final Exam:	30%

Assignments

*All written assignments must be submitted using MLA format. Please visit my office hours if you have questions about using MLA.

Attendance and Participation:

Regular attendance, preparation, and participation is crucial for the success of this class. We will have regular in-depth conversations, which requires you to have attentively read the assigned material, ideally annotating and writing your own responses. That said, this will be a generous portion of your grade; if you come to class regularly and participate in discussion you will receive close to full marks. If you have a strong preference against oral contribution, please visit my office hours and we will arrange for an alternate form of participation. If you attend all classes and participate orally once per class, you will receive 10/10 on attendance and participation.

Oral Presentation:

On the first day of class you will sign up for a presentation topic, in groups of 3-4. Presentations should be engaging and show sustained consideration of the material. You do not need to use slides, but visuals often help. On the day of your presentation, each presenter is required to submit a one-page write-up of your presentation, including an explanation of what each group member contributed to the preparation.

Final Essay (2500 words): The final essay should focus on two of the course's texts and advance a coherent and debatable thesis with support from secondary sources. The essay should cite 3-5 secondary sources in proper MLA format. A good essay moves, with each paragraph, through a more detailed and nuanced iteration of its thesis. The final essay is due on the last day of class. Please look at your schedule and think about whether or not this is doable for you. If you need to request an extension I'm happy to talk about that, but you should make your request well in advance.

Midterm and Final Examinations: Both examinations will follow a simple format, consisting of three tasks. Your first task will be to answer a series of short answer questions derived from course readings and lectures. Your second task will be to define several of the key terms discussed in detail in class. Your final task will be to answer essay questions with creative responses and arguments, using textual evidence from course readings. The point of an examination in the arts and humanities is to show, in as little space as possible, the breadth of your knowledge. You are expected to write legibly and to use complete, coherent sentences. Do your best to not pad your answers—cut to the chase. One of the goals of the midterm is to make

sure you are aware, in advance, of the expectations for the final examination.

Course Policies

Technology and Classroom Etiquette

On the first day, we will have a conversation about how to negotiate technology and other issues to create the most productive learning environment for all of us. Come to class ready to think critically about the infiltration of technology into our everyday lives. I hate to be punitive about this, but if I see your phone or a non-class-related screen open, I will dock 1% from your attendance and participation mark.

Email Policy

On business days, I will answer emails within 24 hours of receipt. I may not respond on weekends and holidays, but can guarantee a prompt response when classes are back in session. Please remember that emails are a form of professional workplace communication.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be docked 2% of their grade per business day. Aside from the final essay, I will accept late assignments for thirty days after the due date. Due to institutional deadlines, I will only accept late final essays for fourteen days.

Accommodations

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Where the missed component comprises less than 10% of their final grade, students must make arrangements to make up the assignment with the instructor at least two weeks before the final essay is due.

Academic Offences

In this course, scholastic offences will be handled with seriousness. If you have any questions at any time as to whether what you are doing might risk academic dishonesty, please write me or come see me. All UWO students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.