INTRODUCTION

Coral bleaching caused by global warming

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

ENV 100 Summer term 2019 LEC 0101 University of Toronto, School of the Environment

Instructor
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Ms. Gilbert’s Office Hours:
Room ES2104 (Earth Sciences Building)
Tuesdays, 10:00am to 12:00 noon

Welcome!
Tuesday and Thursdays 1:00-3:00pm
Sidney Smith Hall, Room 1073

Teaching Assistants

Madeleine Fyles:
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:00 am -12:00 noon, room AP508

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Course Description and Rationale

Ecological concerns have begun to permeate our collective consciousness. Ocean acidification, poisoned air, forest clear-cutting, ozone depletion, global climate change, toxic waste sites – the list goes on – all weigh heavily on our personal and intellectual lives. This course introduces students to the scope and seriousness of present ecological concerns, and explores some of the prevailing human-nature relationships undergirding both environmental degradation and sustainability.

We will carry out this exploration in part by touching on some of the major writers and classic essays in the field. Class lectures will be supplemented by audiovisuals, guest lectures and class discussions.
Course Objectives

The course is intended as a broad-based introduction to the study of the environment. The objectives of the course are:

1) to provide students with a “functional literacy” in some of the foundational ideas and concepts in the study of the environment;
2) to help students gain a greater knowledge of, and appreciation for, the sundry ecological challenges confronting the planet;
3) to create an educational atmosphere that is respectful, challenging, engaging, and informative; and
4) to help students learn to think critically about environmental issues, and to express their ideas clearly and effectively.

Course Material

There is a course book and a collection of readings for this course.


2. Other mandatory readings are available through our library system linked via our Quercus portal.

What do you think?

Václav Havel, Czech playwright, essayist, poet, dissident and president of Czechoslovakia, 1989-92, wrote: “Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

Where do you think we might locate hope today?

Quercus

Students are responsible for keeping informed about the course and its content via the course website on Quercus ([https://q.utoronto.ca/](https://q.utoronto.ca/)).

All documents and resources for the course will be accessible through this website.

Quercus is new for all of us this year; a little time and patience is appreciated by all.

For tips on how to use Quercus, click on the “Help” icon while logged in to Quercus.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course! In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach your TA and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060; [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as).

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About 8 million metric tons of plastic are thrown into the ocean annually.

Course Expectations

1) This course requires you to read approximately 20-30 pages for every lecture. This entails a deep reading and comprehension of the argument and the main points supporting it that the author makes (i.e.: not just skimming the text or getting the ‘gist’ of it). Reading texts before lectures will ensure optimum understanding.

2) On the subject of reading, please read the syllabus before asking administrative questions.

3) Attend all lectures. There will be guest lecturers. Everything that occurs in class, including audiovisual presentations and guest lectures, constitutes material that may appear on the in-class test and the final exam. Not all lecture notes will be posted on Quercus; nor will these notes alone help you pass the tests, so it is essential that you attend class. Also, it is helpful to find someone you can borrow notes from should you have to miss a class.

Course Evaluation

1. Mid-Term Test: May 28th, (1.5 hours at Exam Centre), worth 25% of final grade.

2. Tutorial Participation: 10% (2.5 % for each tutorial)

3. Reflection Paper: June 6, worth 30% of final grade.

4. Final Exam: June Exam Period (3 hours at Exam Centre), worth 35% of total mark

*Both the mid-term test and exam will include essay components, short answers, as well as multiple choice questions. The midterm covers Weeks 1 to 6. The exam covers all material.

*Tutorials

Students will attend four tutorials throughout the course. Tutorials will take place on the weeks of May 14, May 21, June 4, and June 11. There are no tutorials on the weeks of May 7 and May 28. Some tutorials will have short assignments which are done in class. Tutorial participation is worth 2.5% per tutorial of the final grade. It is very important to attend tutorials. Students who miss tutorials are only able to make up the 2.5% of their grade if they have appropriate documentation and are approved by their TA.

*More information on each of the above will be supplied in class before the dates of evaluation.

*Please note that the drop date for this course is Tuesday, June 4, 2019.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutorial</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>TA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TUT0101</td>
<td>Tuesday May 14, May 21, June 4, June 11</td>
<td>12:00-13:00</td>
<td>ES1016M</td>
<td>Madeleine Fyles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUT0201</td>
<td>Tuesday May 14, May 21, June 4, June 11</td>
<td>15:00-16:00</td>
<td>LM123</td>
<td>Lauren Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUT0301</td>
<td>Thursday May 16, May 23, June 6, June 13</td>
<td>12:00-13:00</td>
<td>ES1016M</td>
<td>Madeleine Fyles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUT0401</td>
<td>Thursday May 16, May 23, June 6, June 13</td>
<td>15:00-16:00</td>
<td>LM123</td>
<td>Lauren Spring</td>
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**Online Communication Policy**

Use email as a professional tool of correspondence. Always place the course name and number in the subject heading of your email. Directly address the instructor or TA by name, and always provide your own (full) name as part of your message.

**Missed Tests/ Late Assignments / Re-marking Policy – Timeline and Protocol**

**Make-ups for missed tests** will be reserved only for reasons of illness, personal or medical emergency. The make-up tests will occur later in the term at the discretion of the TA. Students should **contact their TA** as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements. All requests must be accompanied by appropriate types of medical **documentation deemed “official” by the Faculty**: the UofT Veriﬁcation of Illness or Injury Form, available to students online; the **Student Health or Disability Related Certificate**; a **College Registrar’s Letter** (from a senior authorized staff); an **Accessibility Services Letter**. Letters should be submitted to the student’s TA no later than one week after returning to class. If the student does not come forward within one week, the TA or the instructor may consider a request to extend the deadline but is under no obligation to do so.

Should you wish your test paper to be **remarked for a miscalculation of marks**, please see your TA. **For concerns about the marking of tests**, please discuss the matter first with the TA who marked your work (look for her/his initials/name on your work).

You may not simply request that the whole work...
be re-examined merely because you feel the mark is too low. **You must specify to the TA exactly which part(s) require re-examination, outlining coherently reasons why the section deserves a re-examination.** If unsatisfied with your mark, it is ONLY after you have met and discussed your work with the TA who marked your work that you can come to the instructor with your concerns.

**Policy for Late Assignments**
Late assignments will be accepted with a late penalty of 2% per day (including weekends). No assignments will be accepted after 10 days.

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**Reflection Paper Questions**

**Reflection Papers Due June 6, worth 30% of final grade**

For your reflection paper, choose **one** of the following questions.

Length: 3 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12-pt. typed.

Identify the most important idea or concept for you that has been raised in the course thus far. Explain the concept, and why it is so significant for you. Then compare how two authors or guest lecturers have addressed this concern, noting points of agreement and difference.

Identify which author/thinker you found most engaging and why. In other words, if you were going to an island for a week, and could only take the works of one author, who would it be? In your answer, identify 3 reasons why you find this author most compelling. Also, include one critical, probing question you would ask of the author if he or she were to come to class.

Adopting the voice of one of our authors/thinkers, compose a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada concerning Canada’s environmental policies around climate change. In your letter, make sure to make three recommendations, and relate them to the ideas put forth by your selected author.

**Feel free to read more widely from the authors/thinkers we have examined throughout the entire course. Suggestions include Stephen Scharper, Rachel Carson, Aldo Leopold, Thomas Berry, James Lovelock, Deborah McGregor, and David Suzuki, among others.**

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Do you agree with Pope Francis? Why or why not?

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Pope Francis (@Pontifex) Jun 18

The emptier a person’s heart is, the more he or she needs to buy, own and consume.

#LaudatoSi
Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto’s *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm)). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. **Potential offences** include, but are not limited to:

**In papers and assignments:**
- Using someone else’s **ideas** or **words** without appropriate acknowledgement
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks
  - (The above two bullets refer to **plagiarism**. If you are in doubt about how to avoid plagiarism, speak to your TA or instructor after you read: [http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize))
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor (in a sense, a form of self-plagiarism as you are misrepresenting your own work)
- Making up sources or facts
- Including references to sources that you did not use
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
  - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work
  - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while “editing”
  - Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission

**On tests and exams:**
- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone
- Looking at someone else’s answers
- Letting someone else look at your answers
- Misrepresenting your identity
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading
**FES** denotes the course book which you will have to purchase (*For Earth’s Sake: Toward a Compassionate Ecology*, by Stephen Scharper, edited by Simon Appolloni. Toronto: Novalis, 2013).

PART 1: Revealing what we’ve been doing to the planet and to one another

**Class 1 (May 7) – NO TUTORIALS**

*We go over course requirements and goals and begin the semester by introducing dimensions of a defining term for our time: the ‘Anthropocene’.*

**Required readings:**
- “We All Lose in the War against Nature,” by Stephen Scharper, pp. 63-64, in *FES*.

**Class 2 (May 9) – NO TUTORIALS**

*We investigate narratives of the built and social environment through a case study of Toronto’s Regent Park. Key themes touched on in this lecture which will be discussed in more detail later in the course include current conceptions of environmental planning, the scripting of nature in urban spaces, unequal ecologies and toxic dumping, and environmental determinism.*

**Required readings:**

**Class 3 (May 14) – TUTORIALS**

*From its earliest (and heroic) messenger, Rachel Carson, to contemporary scientific frameworks all sounding environmental alarm bells, we continue to learn about this epoch of humans altering nature.*

**Required readings:**

**Suggested listening:**

**Suggested viewing:**

**Class 4 (May 16) – TUTORIALS**
During the first hour we will have a guest lecture by Amanda Loder, PhD Candidate in The Department of Physical Geography at the University of Toronto.

Ms. Loder will present her lecture titled “Conservation of wetland ecosystem services: How do we approach and implement effective management and restoration practices under current and future environmental change?”. During the second hour, while looking at what Scharper calls ‘unequal ecologies’, we learn about the unmistakable connection between what we do to Earth systems and to one another.

Required readings:
- “Option for the Poor and the Option for the Earth: Toward a Sustainable Solidarity,” by Stephen Scharper, pp. 154-165 & 170-171, in FES.
- “The Poor Bear Burden of Environmental Hazards,” pp. 41-43, by Stephen Scharper, in FES.

PART 2: Analyzing our current context

Class 5 (May 21) - TUTORIALS

Considering that you (and I) have spent most of our lives in this all-consuming world of ours (education), does it not seem odd that we never (or rarely) discuss what it is all for? In the first section of class we will discuss the role of education in our environmental practice and understanding. In the second section of class we investigate the ocean which we have only recently come to understand – as Mitchell tells us – is “our main life-support system, controlling the planet’s temperature, climate and key chemical cycles.” Should we be concerned?

Required readings:

Suggested listening:

Class 6 (May 23) – TUTORIALS

Guest lecture by Simon Appoloni, PhD

“The devastation of the planet that we are bringing about is negating some hundreds of millions, even billions, of years of past development of the earth,” Thomas Berry tells us; this is not the result simply of cultural, historical changes. Perhaps one of the reasons for this mess is our mistaken understandings about the human within biotic and urban communities.

Required readings:
- “From Community to Communion: The Natural City in Biotic and Cosmological Perspective,” by Stephen Scharper, pp. 135-153, in FES.

Class 7 (May 28)

*Mid-term* (NOT IN CLASS; room to be posted)

Class 8 (May 30) – NO TUTORIALS
During the first half hour we will have a guest lecture by Charlie Katrycz, PhD student in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering at the University of Toronto. Mr. Katrycz will present his lecture titled “Fractal Patterns in Nature”.

Today the most fruitful and authoritative descriptions of the world are those of science. In the preceding weeks, we have learned from science reports and scientists what it is we have to do (or stop doing) to alter our destructive course. Yet, we seem to be making matters worse. Something’s not right. Perhaps it’s not the science that is at fault, but how we approach it?

Required readings:
- “The Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill: Would the Precautionary Principle Have Averted This Disaster?” by Stephen Scharper, pp. 115-120, in *FES*.

Class 9 (June 4) – TUTORIALS

Guest lecture by Professor Stephen Scharper for the first hour. *Thomas Berry stresses that our destructive patterns of living cannot be critiqued effectively or sufficiently from within the traditional humanist ethics or religions, as these have arisen out of a cosmological perspective that places the human being at the center of ethical deliberations, separate from the natural world. Here we explore Indigenous traditions which have allowed Indigenous peoples, for the most part, to perceive a numinous presence within nature and thereby recognize that each aspect of the planet has its own inner life or subjectivity.*

Required readings:

Suggested Reading:
- “Moment Two & Moment Three,” (Remainder of chapter “The Ecological Crisis”) by Stephen Scharper, in *FES*.

PART 3: Redeeming creative spaces for new life-giving relationships

Class 10 (June 6) – TUTORIALS- Reflection Paper Due by 12:00 midnight

“Most of us sense that the Earth is more than a sphere of rock with a thin layer of air, ocean, and life covering the surface,” James Lovelock tells us, adding, “We feel at home here....” What might happen if we actually think this way? This week we will examine the Gaia Theory in the first half of class and in the second half we will critically analyze the market economy.

Required readings:
- “Reverend Billy’s Crusade against the ‘Shopocolypse’, pp. 30-32, in *FES*.

Class 11 (June 11)- TUTORIALS

Guest lecture by Nicole Spiegelaar, PhD Candidate in the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences at the University of Toronto.
We explore the interdependent relationship between the human mind and our environment through an introduction to Environmental Psychology, which asks two fundamental questions: 1) How do natural and built environments affect cognition, mental health and behaviour? 2) How do human perceptions and behaviour impact our environment? We then look towards teachings from the Indigenous James Bay Cree on how to improve these relations for better mental wellness and ecological sustainability.

Required Readings:

Suggested readings:

Class 12 (June 13)- TUTORIALS
And now to wrap things up: we will do a review of the course, go over the final exam, but not before reminding ourselves of our human frailties, the complexity of the world, and how much we really can (and cannot) know about it (at least anytime soon).

Required readings:

Suggestions for further reading (in case there is a topic that interests you)
The following books and/or resources can be found through our library system

Economics/commerce and environment

Ethics and environment


### Religion and environment


—. “Wondering about Wonder as a Possible Antidote to Our Violence against Earth.” In *Advancing Nonviolence and Social Transformation: New Perspectives on Nonviolent Theories*. Edited by Heather Eaton and Lauren Michelle Levesque, 265–280. Sheffield, UK.


### Sustainability and environment


Science and environment

Worldviews and environment

Film and Environment
The Truman Show, US 1998, dir. Peter Weir
The China Syndrome, US 1979, dir. James Bridges
Pocahontas, US 1995, dir. Mike Gabriel and Eric Goldberg
Babette’s Feast, Denmark 1987, dir. Gabriel Axel
WALL-E, US 2008, dir. Andrew Stanton
The Grapes of Wrath, 1940, dir. John Ford