Instructor: Jan Oakley  
Office: Ryan Building 2016  
Office hours: Mondays 3:00-4:00; or by appointment  
Email: joakley@lakeheadu.ca  

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
Ecofeminism is a movement that draws linkages between environmental issues and feminist concerns; in the words of Vandana Shiva, it seeks to create a “democracy of all life.” In this course we will study a sampling of ecofeminist literature to gain familiarity with some of its varied principles in areas including: perceptions of nature, interconnections between gender and nature, responses to Western science and philosophy, Indigenous perspectives, connections between health and the environment, perspectives on human-animal relations, the impacts of globalization, and opportunities for life-affirming forms of activism and ways of thinking and being. Through reading, lecture, class discussion, and individual and group assignments, we will work toward increasing our appreciation for ecofeminist literature through writing, presenting, listening, speaking, thinking critically, and respecting divergent points of view.

REQUIRED TEXT  
Ecofeminism Winter Course Reading Package 2011 – available at the University bookstore  

MARKING SCHEME  
Class Participation – ongoing 20%  
Group Presentation – dates to be determined 20%  
Individual Assignment #1 (your choice) – due February 2 30%  
Individual Assignment #2 (your choice) – due April 4 30%  

Class Participation (20%)  
This is a course with a discussion format and a focus on unpacking the ideas presented in the literature to better understand it and our responses to it. The learning is dependent on participation and thus, attending class, completing the readings, and participating in class is crucial. The class participation mark will be based on: (a) attendance; and (b) engagement in class readings discussions (see below). Engagement will be evaluated in terms of discussion of reading material, frequency of contributions, communication skill, evidence of considering the topic under discussion, and general evidence of applying reason and considered judgement. The participation mark will come in part from a peer evaluation, and in part from the instructor’s evaluation of participation.
Group Presentation and Readings Discussion (20%)
Group presentations will take place on Wednesdays, with 2-4 students presenting and facilitating a class discussion each week. Each group will be responsible for making a presentation based on the readings of the week of their choice. Group members are expected to:
(1) summarize the main ideas, themes, and/or questions raised in the readings of the week, and consider how these ideas are interconnected;
(2) provide a critical response to the readings, including insights, arguments, disagreements, questions and further analysis; and
(3) develop a minimum of three creative, thought-provoking questions based on the readings. Please bring one copy of these questions for each group and one for the instructor.
We will decide in class at the beginning of the term how the presentation weeks will be allocated, and will further discuss expectations of group presentations then.

Individual Assignments (2 x 30%) - Choose TWO of the following:

1. Journal (minimum 5 entries: 6-10 double-spaced pages)
The purpose of the journal is to document personal responses to the readings. You are encouraged to describe reactions to the literature, including insights, arguments, disagreements, questions or further analysis. A minimum of five journal entries are required, addressing readings from five weeks’ of materials from the course package (e.g., you could aim to respond to two readings per journal entry).
Two aspects of the journal that will be evaluated are: (1) is it convincing that the readings were done? and (2) has considered rather than superficial thought been applied? (For example, superficial thought = “I really enjoyed reading about globalization” or “I learned a lot from the article.” Considered thought goes into more reflective detail with argument and/or evaluation and/or interpretation of the discussion.)

2. Ecofeminist Autobiography (6-8 double-spaced pages)
This is a written essay describing your ontogenetic (meaning over your lifetime) development of feminist and environmentalist awareness. In other words, it is intended to be a record of your personal ecological/feminist biography. Questions you might address include: What is the meaning of nature in my life, and how has it changed over my life? What is the role of feminism in my life? What situations (personal, community, national, or global) have influenced my awareness of oppression, including environmental oppression? What are my values with respect to nature and oppression? It is expected that at least three references to literature from the reading package will be included in the autobiography and cited in a References/Works Cited page.

3. Research Paper (6-8 double-spaced pages)
This is a written assignment in which you explore an ecofeminist topic of interest and prepare a written research paper on it. This topic could be a further analysis of a class topic or another topic with approval of the instructor. The purpose of the research paper is to develop more depth in an area of interest, to interact with the scholarly literature, and to further develop written communication skills. It is expected that at least two (2) references external to the course package be used to support your discussion, plus references to reading(s) from the course package as appropriate. A References/Works Cited page should be included with your research paper. Please come to speak to me about plans for your paper before you begin.
4. Ecofeminist Art
Students who choose this assignment will submit a piece of artwork (visual or music) that she or he has produced. The artwork must connect to ecofeminism. A 1-2 page written analysis of the artwork must accompany its submission. The written analysis should explain the meaning of the work and how it relates to ecofeminism.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

Wednesday, January 5: Introduction to the course and each other

Week 1: Principles of Ecofeminism

Monday, January 10: lecture
Wednesday, January 12: presentation/discussion
- Cathleen McGuire & Colleen McGuire: “Ecofeminist Visions” (pp. 1-7)
- Karen Warren: “Key Features of an Ecofeminist Ethic” (pp. 98-102)
- Vandana Shiva: “Principles of Earth Democracy” (pp. 9-11)

Week 2: Narratives of Nature

Monday, January 17: lecture
Wednesday, January 19: presentation/discussion
- Carolyn Merchant: “A Garden Planet” (pp. 1-7)
- Chaia Heller: “Rescuing Lady Nature: Ecology and the Cult of the Romantic” (pp. 13-22)

Week 3: Nature and Gender: Exploring and Critiquing the Links

Monday, January 24: lecture
Wednesday, January 26: presentation/discussion
- Kari Marie Norgaard: “Moon Phases, Menstrual Cycles, and Mother Earth: The Construction of the Special Relationship between Women and Nature” (pp. 197-209)
- Richard Rogers: excerpts from “Beasts, Burgers and Hummers: Meat and the Crisis of Masculinity in Contemporary Television Advertisements” (pp. 281-282; 287-299)

Week 4: A Critical Look at Western Scientific Rationalism and Reductionism

Monday, January 31: lecture
Wednesday, February 2: presentation/discussion
- Vandana Shiva: “Science, Nature and Gender” (pp. 15-26)
- Lynda Birke: “On Keeping a Respectful Distance” (pp. 75-87)
Week 5: Indigenous Knowledge and the Environment

Monday, February 7: lecture
Wednesday, February 9: presentation/discussion
- Chief Dan George: “My Face is the Land” (pp. 76-79)
- Kathi Wilson: “Ecofeminism and First Nations Peoples in Canada: Linking Culture, Gender and Nature” (pp. 333-354)

Week 6: Our Bodies, Our Health

Monday, February 14: lecture. **INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT #1 IS DUE**
Wednesday, February 16: presentation/discussion
- Barbara Ley: “A Movement in the Making” (pp. 1-9); “The Cultural Politics of Sisterhood” (pp. 110-125)
- Naila Hussain: “The Effects of Pesticides on Cotton Workers in Pakistan” (pp. 172-179)

*** READING WEEK FEBRUARY 21-27 – NO CLASSES THIS WEEK ***

Week 7: Human-Animal Relations and Our “Place” in the World

Monday, February 28: lecture
Wednesday, March 2: presentation/discussion
- Val Plumwood: “Being Prey” (pp. 1-6)
- Winona LaDuke: “The Salmon People: Susanna Santos” (pp. 224-229)
- Ursula K. LeGuin: “She Unnames Them” (pp. 233-236)

Week 8: Ecofeminism and the Eating of Animals

Monday, March 7: lecture
Wednesday, March 9: presentation/discussion
- Greta Gaard: excerpts from “Vegetarian Ecofeminism?” (pp. 117-121; 135-146)
- Lori Gruen: “Empathy and Vegetarian Commitments” (pp. 333-340)

Week 9: Let’s Talk Globalization

Monday, March 14: lecture
Wednesday, March 16: presentation/discussion
- Evelyn Hu-DeHart: “Globalization and Its Discontents: Exposing the Underside” (pp. 244-260)
- Lee-Anne Broadhead: “The Gender Dimension to the Search for Global Justice” (pp. 179-182)
**Week 10: Responses to Globalization**

Monday, March 21: lecture  
Wednesday, March 23: presentation/discussion

- Pracha Hutanuwatr: “Globalization from a Buddhist Perspective” (pp. 1-9)  
- Karen Krug: “Farm Women and Local Alternatives to Globalized Agriculture” (pp. 129-134)  
- Helen Forsey: “GMOs: Globalizing Male Omnipotence” (pp. 207-210)

**Week 11: Taking Action and Nurturing Hope**

Monday, March 28: lecture  
Wednesday, March 30: presentation/discussion

- Paula Sherman & Leanne Simpson: “Protecting Our Lands” (pp. 229-234)  
- Janet Banting: “One Environmentalist’s Hard-Won Lessons” (258-262)  
- Kathleen Weiler: “Paulo Freire: On Hope” (pp. 35-39)

**Week 12: Final class**

Monday, April 4 – **INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT #2 IS DUE**  
Course wrap-up and celebration

**OTHER IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION**

**Assignment due dates**
All assignments must be handed in at the beginning of class on the due dates. If you have trouble meeting a due date, please discuss it with me at **least one week prior** to your due date and, if accepted, we will negotiate a new contract for a due date. Missing due dates without prior approval will result in a deduction of 5% per day.

**Backup copies**
Please keep an electronic backup of all work submitted on your hard drive as well as an independent memory device (e.g., flash drive).

**WebCT**
A WebCT site has been set up and will be used a repository for files pertaining to the course, including assignment details, additional readings of interest, presentation files, and any other information of note.

**Academic dishonesty and plagiarism**
The University takes a most serious view of offences against academic honesty such as plagiarism, cheating and impersonation. The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.
Plagiarism will be dealt with severely and it is assumed that students are familiar with the Student Code of Conduct and regulations regarding academic dishonesty: http://calendar.lakeheadu.ca/current/contents/regulations/univregsIXacdishon.html.

Respectful conduct
All students are expected to foster an atmosphere of respect which includes, but is not limited to, open-mindedness, listening attentively, not speaking over or for others, and avoiding all forms of harassment and discrimination.

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<th>Participation rubric (from Allegheny College)</th>
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<td><strong>A grade:</strong> You regularly <em>initiate</em> discussion. This means coming to class thoroughly familiar with the assigned reading and prepared to raise questions, to open discussion, to identify topics of interest in the reading, and to actively engage other students in the discussion. (Obviously this does not mean monopolizing a discussion, or shutting others out, or talking for its own sake rather than to make a point about the topic under discussion).</td>
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<td><strong>B grade:</strong> You participate regularly and productively. This means coming to class prepared and willing to engage. You differ from A-grade discussants in that the latter are self-starters, who do not rely on the instructor’s questions to set the agenda for discussion.</td>
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<td><strong>C grade:</strong> You participate on a regular basis, though less frequently than a B-grade student. C grade discussants’ participation may indicate that they are not well-prepared for class, or have not given thought to the assigned materials.</td>
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<td><strong>D grade:</strong> You contribute only infrequently to the discussion. D-grade discussants’ indicate that they are not well-prepared for class, or have not given thought to the assigned materials.</td>
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<td><strong>F grade:</strong> You do not participate in class discussion. Participation is impossible if the putative participant does not attend class. Frequent absences mandate F grades. Participation that consistently iterates positions which contravene the <em>Ontario Human Rights Code</em> will also garner an F grade.</td>
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CONTENTS OF READING PACKAGE


