

**School of the Environment
University of Toronto
ENV 100H1F: Introduction to Environmental Studies**

Term: Summer 2017
Instructor: Prof. Stephen B. Scharper; stephen.scharper@utoronto.ca
Phone: (416) 978-7433
Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1-3 p.m. and selected tutorials to be announced (2 tutorials total)
Location: ES B142
Office: Room 2103, Earth Sciences Building
Office Hours: Thurs. @-12:30 pm to 1 pm and by appointment, before and after class. I am very willing to meet students at other mutually agreed upon times. Please email me for an appointment.

Teaching Assistants:

Ms. Emily Gilbert em.gilbert@mail.utoronto.ca

Ms. Rachel Levine rachel.levine@mail.utoronto.ca

In general, owing to the volume of email received, it is more expeditious to contact TA Rachel Levine with administrative questions concerning the course.

Course Description and Rationale

Ecological concerns have begun to permeate our collective consciousness. Acid rain, 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 attempts to introduce students to both the scope and seriousness of present ecological concerns, as well as some core principles and concepts in the field of environmental studies. We will do this 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. There will be two tutorials; it is essential that students attend class faithfully. (N.B. There may also be some "surprise" guests.) Everything that occurs in class and tutorials, 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 Blackboard, so it is essential to attend class!

The Course Website is accessible via: <http://portal.utoronto.ca>

Course Texts

There are two required texts:

- 1) A compiled set of readings, which every student is required to obtain. It will be available at **The Copy Place, 720 Spadina Ave., Suite 103, Toronto M5S 2T9** (half a block south of Bloor, near The Beer Store; enter building and turn right), 416-961-2679: copyplace@bellnet.ca
- 2) Scharper, Stephen. *For Earth's Sake: Toward a Compassionate Ecology* (Toronto: Novalis, 2013), available at the University of Toronto Bookstore, 214 College Street, 416-640-5810.

Course Format

The primary format of the course will be interactive lectures, with guest speakers, audiovisual material, and brief discussion work within class, in addition to selected tutorials.

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 Evaluation

In-Class Test, 1.5 hours	June 1	30%
Reflection Paper (3 pages)	June 15	25%
Class Participation	ongoing	5%
Final Exam	Jun. Exam Period	40%

It is imperative that students show up for the test and final exam. Failure to do so without a medical note or other serious reason with documentation from your Registrar will result in a zero for the missed test or exam. Both the test and exam will include an essay component and short answer component which will be discussed in class. We will also discuss the nature of the reflection paper in class. As you know, plagiarism is a serious

academic offense. Please see: <http://life.utoronto.ca/get-smarter/academic-honesty/>. For tips on avoiding plagiarism, see: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Introduction: Why Study the Environment?

May 16: We will go over course requirements and goals and begin the semester by discussing the terms of the course and some dimensions of the so-called environmental crisis. We will also view part of the documentary, “Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*,” available at Media Commons, Robarts, 3rd floor.

Special Class: The Hon. Elizabeth May, MP, Head of the Green Party of Canada. Friday, May 19, 4-6pm

May 19: N.B. We will not meet Thursday, May 18. Instead, we will meet Friday, May 19, from 4-6pm in ES 1050 to hear **The Hon Elizabeth May**, who will speak on current federal environmental policies. Please sign in with the TAs as you enter ES 1050. For those who cannot make this time, please contact Rachel Levine and alternative make up session arrangements will be made. Reading: David Orr, “What Is Education For?”, from *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2004, pp. 7-15; Scharper, Foreword and Introduction, 11-21, “From Corpse to Compost,” 130-132, and “We All Lose in the War against Nature,” 63-64.

Climate Change and the “Land Ethic”

May 23: Film: *Before the Flood* (L. DiCaprio, 2016), Reading: Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” from *A Sand County Almanac*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1949, pp. 201-226, Scharper, “The Bride Wore...Green,” 133-134 climate change reading in course packet

Animals: A Cultural Approach

May 25: Guest Lecture, Prof. Hilary Cunningham, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Toronto. Readings: Mary Midgely, “Beasts, Brutes, and Monsters,” in *What Is an Animal?*, ed. Tim Ingold (1988) and Edmund Leach, “Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse,” *Anthrozoos*, Volume 2 (1989). (These readings will be posted on Blackboard.)

Gaia, Ecofeminism, and “Sustainable Development”

May 30
Reading: James Lovelock, *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, pp. vii-12, Scharper, “The Gaia Theory,” 68-82, Scharper, “The Bride Wore...Green,” 133-134 and Scharper, Ecofeminism chapter; Vandana Shiva, “Monocultures of the Mind,” from *The Trumpeter* (1999), via Blackboard.

In-Class Test

June 1
In-Class Test: N.B. This day, we will have an in-class, 1.5 hour test, details to be discussed.

“Sustainable Development,” Food, and “The Precautionary Principle”

June 6: Reading: Henry David Thoreau, “Walking,” from the *Thoreau Reader* and John Muir, “A Near High View of the Sierra,” from *The Mountains of California* (1894), Scharper, “The Ethics of Organic Farming,” 151-153, and “The Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill: Would the Precautionary Principle Have Averted This Disaster?”, 115-120. Vandana Shiva, “Monocultures of the Mind,” from *The Trumpeter* (1999), via Blackboard.

What is the Role of Worldviews in Environmental Thought?

June 8
Readings: David Suzuki, Chapter 1: “‘Homo Sapiens: Born of the Earth,’” from *The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature*. Toronto: Greystone Press, 1997, pp. 8-28, Thomas Berry, “Technology and the Healing of the Earth,” from *The Dream of the Earth*, San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, pp. 50-69, Scharper, “Revered Billy’s Crusade against the ‘Shopocalypse,’” 30-32 and “Green Dreams...,” pp. 35-40.

Indigenous Approaches to the Environment

June 13 A look at aboriginal lifeways.
Guest Presenter: Ms. Emily Gilbert. Reading: Vine Deloria, Jr., “Sacred Places and Moral Responsibility,” in *Worldviews, Religion, and the Environment: A Global Anthology*, ed. R. Foltz, Wadsworth: Belmont, Cal., 2003, pp. 79-89, and Deborah McGregor, “Coming Full Circle: Indigenous Knowledge, Environment, and Our Future.,” *The American Indian Quarterly*, Volume 28, Nos. 3&4 (2004), 385-410 (on Blackboard).

Consumerism, Corporations, and Water (Reflection Paper Due)

June 15: Reflection Papers Due. The role of corporations in environmental decision making, and the place of water within this context, will be discussed. Films: The Corporation and The World according to Monsanto; Readings to be shared via Blackboard.

What Is Social Ecology?

June 20

Reading: Leonardo Boff, "Social Ecology: Poverty and Misery" from *Ecotheology: Voices from North and South*, ed. David Hallman, Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, pp. 235-247. Scharper, "Poor Bear Burden of Environmental Hazards," 41-43, and "Born Again: Liberation Theology," 83-84. Scharper, "Option for the Poor and Option for the Earth: Toward a Sustainable Solidarity," pp. 154-171,

Conclusion

June 22 Final Wrap up and Exam Review

Reading: Stephen Scharper, "A Reflection," from *Econightmare: Culpability, Responsibility, and the Environmental Crisis*: Toronto: Massey College, pp. 35-44, Scharper, "On Sacrifice, Spirituality, and Silver Linings," 172-174 and "Conclusion," 180-199.

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