The University of Western Ontario  
HISTORY 9833B  
Environmental History: People & Nature through Time  
Winter 2020

Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30  
Instructor: Prof. Alan MacEachern  
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:30-2:30  
Department of History, Office: Lawson Hall 2268  
Email: amaceach@uwo.ca

Course Description:
Environmental history considers how humans have acted toward and thought about nature through time, and how nature itself has changed. Besides introducing the main concepts and debates in the field, “People & Nature through Time” traces a global environmental history, with special emphasis on the concept of the Anthropocene - the era in which humans have made intense and effectively permanent environmental changes on a global scale.

Course Materials:
Seminars are built around a series of readings, together averaging around 300 pages per week. Readings have been made available on the course OWL site, by the instructor, on 1-day reserve in Weldon Library, on the internet (linked off the syllabus), and/or through the Western Libraries online system.

Methods of Evaluation:

Seminar participation – 35%
This is a seminar course and student participation is essential to its success. Students are expected to read all assigned readings and participate in every class. The instructor will give a provisional participation grade to students midway through the course.

Images essay – due 12 Feb – 15%
In week 6, the class discusses images of nature and history, as seen in photographs, film, advertising, etc. Students are to write a 1000-word essay on an environmental image of their choice (not discussed in detail in any of the assigned readings for that week’s class), treating the images, as Joan Schwartz suggests, “not as illustrations but as primary sources.”

Major essay – 50%
Students are to write a 5-6000 word major research paper, with a primary source component, on an environmental history topic to be determined in consultation with the instructor. In keeping with the course, the essay can be on any period and place in history, large or small. Bear in mind the importance of having a manageable topic, however, as well as an available and manageable source base. (Western
Library’s Archives and Research Collections Centre has a number of collections which connect with environmental history. I will discuss this further in class.

**introduced in class – 11 Mar – 10%**

Students will give a 5-minute presentation that introduces their research essay in progress, raises any issues they are facing, and opens up discussion to seek input for improvement. To accompany the presentation, students will provide their classmates and instructor with a single-page, one-sided handout.

**final essay – due 15 Apr – 40%**

*The fine print:*

All assignments will be discussed further in class.

Essays are to be submitted through the OWL site. There is no need to submit a paper copy.

Late essays are penalized 5% per day. Please come to the instructor with any routine requests for extensions. However, a student’s request for accommodation (on medical, non-medical, compassionate grounds) are to go to the graduate chair, who will consult and communicate with the instructor.

The final date to submit material for the course is 22 April. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

**Course Schedule and Readings:**

1  **8 Jan – Introductions**


2  **15 Jan – The Anthropocene**

3 **22 Jan – Indigenous People & Nature**

4 **29 Jan – Climate**

5 **5 Feb – Energy**
- Timothy Mitchell, “Carbon Democracy,” *Economy and Society* 38 no.3 (2009), 399-432.

6 **12 Feb – Seeing Nature**

**Reading Week**

7 **26 Feb – Food & Agriculture**

8 **4 Mar – Inequality**

9 11 Mar – *(Environmental) History as Literature / final essay works-in-progress*


10 18 Mar – Sensing the Past


11 25 Mar – Critters

• Joanna Dean, Darcy Ingram, and Christabella Sethna, eds., *Animal Metropolis: Histories of Human-Animal Relations in Urban Canada* (2017), introduction, ch.1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, and epilogue.

12 1 Apr – Environmentalism

Additional Statements

**Academic Offences:**
Scholastic Offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitute a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf).

[Include this paragraph on plagiarism-checking software only if relevant. If not relevant delete the paragraph below plus this paragraph as well]
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](http://www.turnitin.com)).

**Accessibility Options:**
Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website: [www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html).

**Medical Issues**
The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Please go to: [https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf](https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf) to read about the University’s policy on medical accommodation. This site provides links the necessary forms. In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation should be requested. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation. Once the instructor has made a decision about whether to grant an accommodation, the student should contact his/her instructors to determine a new due date for tests, assignments, and exams.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: [http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html).

**Plagiarism:**
Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a 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 offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).
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 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).

The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of Publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'At above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.
Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website:

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

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Heidi Van Galen, Administrative Officer, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84963 or e-mail vangalen@uwo.ca.