ENGLISH 108C
GREEN READING

Hagey Hall 280
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 108C introduces students to a range of writing on nature and the environment. As such, it attempts to bridge the arts and the sciences. It is divided into six interrelated segments. The readings in each segment progress in chronological sequence, to give some sense of the development of ideas. Selections include poetry and prose, fiction and non-fiction, complete texts and extracts.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To introduce students to significant, reasonably well-written texts on nature and the environment.
2. To help students think about the changing views of nature from early times to the present.
3. To examine some of the issues that are relevant to the environmental concerns of today.
4. To develop skills in reading, critical thinking, research and clear writing.
5. To increase your enjoyment of reading and your appreciation of literature (I hope).

TEXTBOOKS:

The following textbooks are required:

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Thomas Allen)
Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf* (Random House)
David Suzuki, *The Big Picture* (Greystone)
*English 108C: Courseware Package* (available from UW Bookstore)
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

(Works marked with an asterisk are in the Courseware Package.)

January 3: Introduction to the course.

January 5, 10 & 12: The Pastoral World – Nature and Creation:
  *Creation accounts in *Genesis (Chapters 1 – 3); *Ovid, *Metamorphoses (lines 1 – 199); and
  *Marvell, “Bermudas”
  *Jourdain, from *Newes from the *Barmudas.

January 17, 19 & 24: The Anti-Pastoral World – Nature and Evolution:
  *Blake, “The Lamb” and “The Tyger”; *Hardy, “In a Wood”; *Hughes, “Hawk Roosting”
  *Dillard, “Fecundity” from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek.

January 26 & 31: “Mother Nature”:
  *Film *The Secret Garden (1992); *Burnett, “”Magic” from *The Secret Garden.
  *Wordsworth, “I wandered lonely as a cloud”
  *Louv, Introduction, and chapters 1, 4 and 5 of *The Nature Principle.

February 2, 7, 9, 14 & 16: Living in Nature
  *Thoreau, “Spring” from *Walden.
  *Muir, “Cedar Keys” from *A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf
  *Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf
  *Leopold, “Sketches Here and There” from *A Sand County Almanac

READING WEEK (FEBRUARY 21 – 25)

February 28, March 1, 6, 8, 13 & 15: Environmental Issues:
  *Carson, *Silent Spring
  *Canadian Nature Poems: Cogswell, “Paleontology Lecture”; Rhensich, “”Hymn for Herbicide”
  *Suzuki, *The Big Picture

March 20 & 22: “The End of Nature”:
  *Page, “Unless the Eye Catch Fire”
  *Weisman, “Earth without People”

March 27 & 29: Catch-up and Discussion.
GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS:

- Two short response papers will account for 10% of your final grade (i.e., 5 marks each) (see below).
- One shorter essay (approximately four typewritten, double-spaced pages) will account for 20% of your final grade.
- One longer assignment, involving some research, will account for 35% of your final grade.
- One 2 1/2-hour final examination will account for the remaining 35% of the final grade.
- Class participation will affect your grade positively (up to 3%), as will a voluntary presentation, time permitting (up to 2%). There may be some deduction of marks (up to 3%) if your attendance is noticeably irregular.
- One number grade (1%) may be deducted for each day that an assignment is late. No paper will be accepted after the other students' papers have been returned to them.

RESPONSE PAPERS:

If your surname comes alphabetically between A and L inclusive, you will write a brief response to Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* and to one chapter from *Silent Spring*. If your surname comes between M and Z inclusive, you will write on Maclean's *A River Runs Through It* and on one chapter from Suzuki's *The Big Picture*. These will be due on the Thursday before we discuss these works in class.

Your response may be set up as a short essay (2 – 3 typewritten pages, double-spaced), in which you may choose to respond as you wish; or you may specifically respond to the following questions. If you respond in essay style, these questions may give you some sense of direction.

**For the stories:**

- Summarize the plot in one or two sentences. Was it easy or hard to write this summary? Why or why not?
- Did you enjoy the story? What did you enjoy about it and what didn't you enjoy about it?
- Which episode was especially memorable? Which character was especially memorable? Why?
- Did you find it easy or hard to read? What gave you difficulty or what puzzled you? Did anything bother you?
- Suggest two or three issues from the story that you would like raised in class
- In what way(s) is this work relevant to a course on nature and the environment, if at all? If you were teaching a course titled *Green Reading*, would you use this book? Why or why not?

**For the chapters:**

- Summarize the main argument in one or two sentences. Mention two points that your summary misses or misstates.
- Did you find the chapter easy or hard to read? What gave you difficulty, or what puzzled you?
- What arguments, examples, discussions, etc. did you find especially interesting and/or effective? Did you disagree with anything? Did you learn anything? (Refer to any previous knowledge that you had.)
- Suggest two or three issues from the chapter that you would like raised in class.
- If you were teaching a course titled *Green Reading*, would you use this article (or the book from which it it taken? Explain.
The main purpose of the Response Papers is to generate ideas for class discussion. While I expect your response to be effectively written, I'm more interested in your ideas. For this assignment, don't shy away from being controversial, if you wish.

ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE: I won't insist on any one style for setting out quotations, documenting page references to your sources, and setting out a Bibliography / Works Cited list. The most common styles are the MLA for the humanities courses and the APA for the social sciences. More information can be found in a good style manual, such as The Little, Brown Handbook.

I mark essays holistically, taking into account content, clarity of organization, and correctness of style and technique. Before you submit your paper, be sure to proofread it, checking for errors in typing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Consider your readers: Will they have difficulty following your ideas?

Unless otherwise stated a page means a double-spaced, typed page, 12-point font size.

ASSIGNMENT 1:

DUE DATE: Thursday, February 9, at the beginning of class.
LENGTH: Approximately four pages.
TOPIC: Write an essay on one of the following

1. Answer EITHER (a) OR (b) OR (c):

(a) Lynn White has written, “Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism, . . . insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his own ends.” Discuss this statements, referring to the creation stories in Genesis and Ovid's Metamorphoses.

(b) Compare the accounts of creation in Genesis, Ovid's Metamorphoses, and one other creation story that you can find. You should use the terms pastoral and anti-pastoral in at least part of your essay. Please include a copy of the third story as an Appendix.

(c) Select and combine ideas from (a) and (b) into one essay. I'll give you some leeway in formulating a topic.

2. Discuss the presentation of the pastoral world. Refer to the selections from Paradise Lost, and to at least two of Marvell's “Bermudas,” Jourdain's News from the Barmudas, and Darwin's account of the Galapagos Islands. Why do you think that pastoral imagery is so prominent in early travel writing?

Topics continued on the next page.
3. Using two representative works for each term, compare and contrast pastoral and anti-pastoral worlds, and their significance. For their significance, you may consider such issues as Pastoral: Creation / Anti-Pastoral: Fall; Pastoral: Innocence / Anti-Pastoral: Experience; Pastoral: Creation / Anti-Pastoral: Evolution.

4. Using Dillard's "Fecundity" as a basis for your ideas, what are some ethical and philosophical issues that enter into the Creation vs. Evolution debate?

ASSIGNMENT 2

DUE DATE: Thursday, March 29, at the beginning of class.
LENGTH: Variable
TOPIC: A research paper in two parts: Do A and B.

Select an issue that is related to "green reading" and that interests you. Be as specific as possible. To help generate ideas, you might consider:
- An issue raised in Silent Spring, or in any chapter of The Big Picture, or in any reading from the course (e.g., fly-fishing in A River Runs Through It).
- An issue related to your major course of interest (I'll make some suggestions for Architecture, Computer Science, Environmental Studies, Mathematics, Music, Political Science, Psychology, Religious Studies, Urban Planning. The list can go on and on.).
- An issue related to a hobby or a job (e.g., last year a student wrote about helping emotionally disturbed children at nature camps).

A. Find and research at least four, but no more than six sources related to your topic. One of the sources may be from the syllabus. At least two of the sources should be reasonably scholarly; in this regard, the following website from the University Library should help: http://subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/english. Click on Course Guides for specific reference to this course.

Once you have selected your research material, present it in an annotated bibliography. Write out each work in proper bibliographical format. Then (a) summarize the work in no more than five sentences; and (b) show how the work is relevant to your topic, or what aspects of the work are of interest to your topic—again no more than five sentences.

B. Write an article for a real or imaginary magazine or journal. The article should aim to enlighten in an entertaining way. The magazine or journal should be geared toward a reasonably well educated, adult, but non-specialist audience. Your article should be approximately five pages, double spaced, but it may be longer. Feel free to present it as it would appear in the magazine or journal, with pictures, etc.

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THE FACULTY OF ARTS REQUIRES THAT WE NOTIFY YOU OF THE FOLLOWING:

**Academic Integrity**: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity) for more information.

**Grievance**: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm) When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline**: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing academic offenses and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm) For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm)

**Appeals**: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition), or Policy 71, Student discipline, may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes that he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm)

**Note for Students with Disabilities**: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.