

ERS 360 Nature: Art, Myth, and Folklore

Winter 2014

Waterloo Summit Centre for the Environment,
Huntsville, Ontario

Instructor: *Dr. Amanda Hooykaas*
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Class Dates: Monday, February 17 (1pm) to Saturday, February 22, 2014 (1pm)
Course Website: Located via learn.uwaterloo.ca

Course Description

From the course catalogue: This course explores the symbolic representation of nature in art, architecture, myth, and literature from a multi-cultural perspective. The ideas about sacred spaces and environments will also be discussed. *Prerequisite: at least 2B unless otherwise discussed with the Instructor*

"In every walk in nature, one receives more than he seeks."

~ John Muir

What is it about nature that offers such intrigue, delight, and possibility for reflection? What is offered by nature that can't be found elsewhere? How can one define such nature? And how is that definition explored in story, art, and experience? How is nature represented in a community? By its citizens?

The quest to understand nature—the essential characteristics of self and the world, and the place of self in the world—has occupied people for as long as they have been capable of abstract thought. All cultures have used myth, folklore, and art—sometimes codified into religious belief—to express their exploration, categorization, and understanding of our relationship with nature. In ERS 360, we examine these essentially symbolic (in contrast to our usual rationalist) approaches, focusing on some central themes or motifs in “nature” or “environment”. We will examine nature from the global to the local scale and will focus our time on the experiences of a northern community. The course is based in Huntsville, Ontario, and we will use this landscape and its residents as the focus of our work. Integrating local art, myth, and folklore, we will arrive at the essence of our varied relationships with nature and define the role of nature in the peopled landscape and vice versa.

Course Structure: Your time in Huntsville will be busy and you be expected to start the in-class portion of the course already having prepared your book review and contributed online. ERS 360 requires a high degree of participation and the course will be what you make of it. Our classes will consist of lectures, discussions of readings, guests, films, trips, reflections, and presentations of your work. You will be encouraged to ask questions of yourself, your surroundings, and your interpretation of nature and relationships to it.

A schedule will be provided to students in January. Class activities will be held for about 6 hours/day – with morning discussions, afternoon presentations and guests, and evening group and independent activities. *Class will begin on Tuesday at 9am and end Saturday at 11am.*

Textbook: You will be required to purchase a course reader on Campus in preparation for this course. Additionally, you will select a book to review prior to the beginning of the course (details below).

Evaluation:

Course Component	% of Final Grade	Deadline
Online Pre-Course Activities	10 (5% each)	Friday, January 17 and 31: 1pm
Book Review/Presentation	20	Tuesday, February 18: 9am
Community Service Learning	20	Discussion Paper: Friday, February 28: 1pm
Course Journal	20	Friday, February 21: 1pm
Final Assignment	30	Friday, March 7: 1pm

University and Instructor Policies:

Late Assignments: All assignments are due on the dates and times as shown in the schedule. Assignments submitted past the designated date and times are deemed late. Late assignments are penalized 10% per calendar day (of the total marks available). For example, an assignment submitted after the specified time will be penalized 10% until midnight on the due date, then another 10% the following day until midnight for a total penalty of 20%, and so on. An assignment more than five calendar days late will receive a grade of 0. *You can be exempted from these penalties if you have a medical certificate or other documentation validated by your undergraduate advisor, campus physician, or by counseling services.* If you know in advance that you will not be able to meet a particular deadline **for any reason**, please contact the instructor to make alternative arrangements. Also, note that late assignments will not be accepted once other student assignments have been graded and handed back.

Please ensure that you are diligent in *backing up computer files* and making *draft copies* of all assignments, as computer/disk failures, printer problems, etc. will not normally be considered a valid reason to waive the late assignment deduction.

Unclaimed Assignments: Unclaimed assignments will be retained for one month after term grades become official in Quest. After that time, they will be destroyed in compliance with UW's confidential shredding procedures.

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/ for more information]

Consequences of Academic Offences: 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. When misconduct has been found to occur, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. 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>. Within ENV, those committing academic offences (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will be placed on disciplinary probation and will be subject to penalties, which may include a grade of 0 on affected course elements, 0 on the course, suspension, and expulsion. Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Definition of Plagiarism: "The act of presenting the ideas, words or other intellectual property of another as one's own."- Source: University of Waterloo, Policy 71.

To Avoid Plagiarism: The use of other people's work *must* be properly acknowledged and referenced in all written material such as take-home examinations, essays, laboratory reports, work-term reports, design projects, statistical data, computer programs and research results. The properly acknowledged use of sources is an accepted and important part of scholarship. Use of such material without complete and unambiguous acknowledgement, however, is an offence under Policy 71. Please familiarize yourself with the University of Waterloo's policy dealing with plagiarism. Be especially careful when using materials obtained from the Internet, and be aware that software available to instructors can be used to check student submissions for plagiarism. **For this course, plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments.** This is being done to verify use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first lecture of the Term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin. **NOTE:** Students may request an alternative to Turnitin, which is to prepare an annotated bibliography for each assignment. For advice on how to prepare an annotated bibliography, see: www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/annotated-bibliography

Counseling Services: The University of Waterloo can be a challenging environment. Counseling Services provides a wide range of strategies to help you do your best during your time here at UW. At Counseling Services you can find help with everything from Study Skills, Career Planning, and Personal Goals to Mental Health, Coping With Stress, and Emergencies/Crisis. For more information about their services or to book an appointment, please call them at 1 519 888 4567 x32655, visit them in Needles Hall (NH) Room 2080, or visit their website at www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocs/.

Student Accommodations:

Students with Disabilities: The AccessAbility Office, 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 this office at the beginning of each academic term and discuss your needs with the course instructor.

Religious Observances: Please inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Course Components:

Online Pre-Course Activities: 10%

As this course is not typical in structure and length, you will be required to participate in two pre-course activities on LEARN in order to both familiarize you with class members and the course itself, and to also satisfy course hour requirements.

Activity 1: You will post an initial profile on LEARN; this will discuss your reason for taking the course, initial goals for the course, and a few interesting points about your relationship with nature. After reviewing all profiles, your instructor will create groups of 4-5 on the discussion board. You, as group members, must discover why your smaller group was selected and explore other similarities. You will be encouraged to share commonalities on the discussion board. (The first part is due on Friday, January 17 at 1pm and the second part is due Friday, February 31 at 1pm along with Activity 2.)

Activity 2: You will post a reflection on what you think "nature" is/is not. This will be based on your own experiences – do not refer to external sources – simply share what you feel about nature. This doesn't need to be "correct" as there is no one answer; this will serve as a primer for our first in-person class.

Book Review/Presentation: 20%

You will be provided with a list of books about the Huntsville area (history, art, fiction, non-fiction, travel) from which you may select one to read in preparation for the course. **Once you have chosen one, please let the course instructor know via email so that another student does not read and present on the same book.** You will be required to submit a book review (8-10 pages) and present your book to the class. Five fifteen-minute presentations will occur every day.

A book review is a descriptive and critical or evaluative account of a book. Like a book report, it provides a summary of content and an analysis of structure, yet you will also assess the value of a book and recommend (or not recommend) the book to other readers. As you are reading, keep handy a notepad or single sheet of paper for note taking as you read – this saves substantial time when writing. (*Details adapted from <http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/bookreports.html>.)* Reviews are concerned mainly with the one book presented, relying upon only a few standard reference works for brief and relevant comments on the author and on any special circumstances about the writing of the book. Book reviews are not research papers.

Biographical Information: Give the author's name; full title of book including subtitle; editor, if any; place, publisher and date of publication; edition, if necessary; and the number of pages - all this in bibliographical form under the title of the review. (APA Format Required)

Background Information: Supply any information about the author which shows their credentials for writing in this field or which reveals any influences, which may have affected the author's point of view. Note any interesting circumstances that led to the writing of the book.

Classification on the Basis of the Kind of Book: The book is may be fiction or nonfiction, but classify it further according to its subject area, such as history, philosophy, travel, biography, autobiography, psychology, anthropology, etc. Clues for this classification may be found in the title, subtitle, table of contents, reviewers' comments, author's preface, and introduction.

Classification on the Basis of the Author's Intention: The author's intention may be apparent by the way the author treats the subject. Is the material meant for specialists, students, or the general public? Is it limited to a narrow topic or is it a survey of the subject? Several areas may provide clues: appendices, bibliographies and general indexes usually accompany scholarly works; prefaces and introductions often contain an author's explicit statement of intention; the content and style of expression will be a good indication of the intended audience.

Subject and Thesis Statement: What is the book about? Tell your audience not only the main concern of the book in its entirety (subject) but also what the author's particular point of view is on that subject (thesis statement). If you cannot find an adequate statement in the author's own words or if you feel that the stated thesis statement is not that which the book actually develops (make sure you check for yourself), then you will have to compose a thesis statement that does cover all the material. This statement must be brief (a sentence or a paragraph), accurate, and comprehensive.

Analysis of Structure: The thesis statement will clearly indicate the major idea of the book, but you must also point out the organization of subsidiary ideas, and how they relate to the thesis statement and to one another. The chapter headings and sectional divisions will reveal most of the outline of the book; however, on reading the book, you may see another plan, with somewhat different divisions. If so, make your own

plan, showing clearly the order and relation of the parts. Whether your own or the author's, this plan should include the thesis statement, major parts, their division into sections, and the main points in these sections (summary of content).

Summary of Content: The summary is based on your reading notes, follows the author's order, and is drastically reduced to the chief ideas that advance the author's argument. It may be presented with the analysis of structure or discussed separately.

Critical Comments: Critical comments should form the bulk of the review. State whether or not you feel the author's treatment of the subject matter is appropriate for the intended audience. Ask yourself:

- Has the purpose of the book been achieved?
- What contribution does the book make to the field?
- Is the treatment of the subject matter objective?
- Are there facts and evidence that have been omitted?
- What kinds of data, if any, are used to support the author's thesis statement?
- Can the same data be interpreted to alternate ends?
- Is the writing style clear and effective?
- Does the book raise issues or topics for discussion?

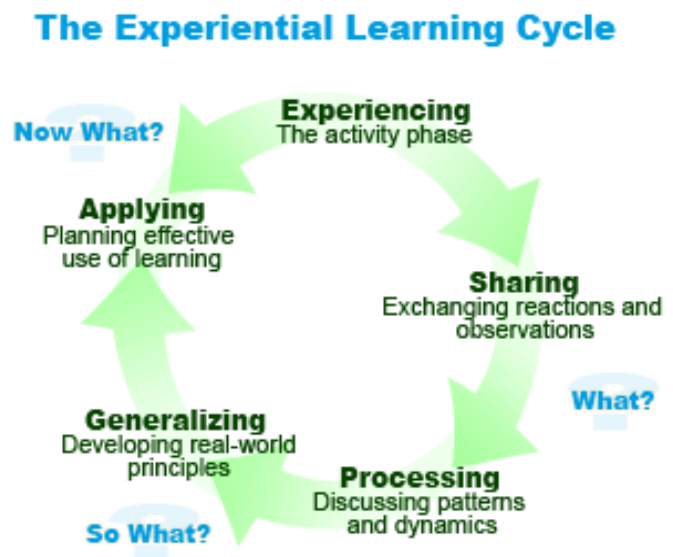
Support your evaluation with evidence from the text. In conclusion, you may want to state whether you liked or disliked the book.

Community Service Learning (group assignment): 20%

Service learning is a form of experiential learning that combines relevant community service experiences with reflective exercises for a powerful learning experience that aligns with course curriculum. Groups of students will spend a ½ day with elementary school students at Tawingo College to engage them in activities related to the course. You will be expected to create a course-related activity suitable for the grade level, size of class, and schedule. You will be evaluated on community service learning preparation, how your activity is received by your students, and your group's collective reflection on the experience.

This reflection will discuss what you did, how your activity was received, how you might improve it, and recommendations for community engagement.

Students who reflect on service-learning experiences will get more from this experience. Reflection helps you thoughtfully process your community work. It helps you critically assess and understand what you are seeing and doing. The figure is a graphical representation of the reflection process, also referred to as the Experiential Learning Cycle. As you participate in service learning, you should ask yourself these questions: **What? So What? Now What?** The reflection process begins with a defining and sharing of the "What" of your experience, and follows a continuous cycle towards "So What?" and "Now What?"



Course Journal: 20%

The course journal is designed to help students be reflective about what you are learning in the course and to connect course material to your everyday lives. Students are encouraged to use the journal to develop ideas for assignments and your own personal development.

The objectives of this assignment are:

- To encourage reflection about what and how you are learning
- To encourage development of writing skills
- To encourage retention and synthesis of course material

This journal will contain your observations and comments regarding anything that relates to this course. Relevant matters include the content of the course (topics discussed in lecture, readings, trips) and the administration of the course (such as course activities and requirements). This is a chance for you to reflect on what you are learning and show how the course material relates to everyday life.

You will be asked to make several directed entries, and you will also make many independent entries as you reflect upon this course and its content. **Directed entries** will be responses to specific and varied prompts.

- ▶ The first entry in the journal will discuss your personal goals for the course.

In addition, you will have many opportunities to **choose your own topic!** It is acceptable to write on any idea related to this course. In these entries you should clearly express **your thoughts and reflections** about each subject. Avoid entries that are merely descriptive or chronological.

- ▶ This is **NOT A DIARY** in which you record what you did and when you did it.
- ▶ Vary your topics. Find ways to put the material covered in class into the context of your own life.

Although you may ask occasional questions, don't make your independent entries simply a series of questions separated by comments. Questions are best addressed in class, they do not allow for significant thought development in the journal format.

The important part of the journal is to write—substantively and frequently. The principal constraint is that the entries must somehow relate to the course's content or administration. Other than this constraint, what you write about is up to you. You should express your true feelings or opinions.

- ▶ Agreement or disagreement with the professor's opinions will **NOT** influence grades.

Entries should be substantive and meaningful. Don't assume that you don't know enough to write something decent. Start by reflecting on what you are learning. Your entries will likely improve with time. Commit yourself to filling in your journal with prose, maps, drawings, photos, etc. relevant to this course.

Always bring the journal to class. Journals will be collected irregularly on an unannounced basis to ensure spontaneity. Also, you may be required to write some directed entries during class. Journals will usually be returned the next class period after they are collected.

Final Assignment: 30%

You will need to create a portfolio of work representing your experience of "Nature: Art, Myth, and Folklore" through art, music, poetry, story, audio excerpts, photography, news article, and other forms of expression. *What does nature mean to those within the community of Huntsville? To yourself? How can these interpretations be shared with others? How can they be represented?* Because this component of the course is worth 30% of your final grade, a substantial amount of effort is required and you will be evaluated on the quality of your work. Your portfolio is expected to show strong reflection on your experiences, provoke

conversation, and provide insight into how one may experience nature through myth, art, and folklore. Your portfolio will be virtual and created with a WordPress site. With your permission, this site will be linked to the Waterloo Summit Centre for the Environment's website.

In its most basic form, portfolios are collections of work, usually accompanied by commentary that explains the purpose of the collection and the reason for including particular items. The particular artifacts to be included are a combination of instructor and student-selected work. Throughout the course you should collect certain artifacts/kinds of artifacts to illustrate your knowledge and skills. You are to create a strong, persuasive portfolio and thus your work should be reflective of your experience in Huntsville and should be created while being mindful of the lens of the course. Your electronic portfolio will be evaluated with the following rubric (adapted from Skawinski & Thibodeau, 2002):

Level	Description
Distinguished	Evidence selected shows a high degree of understanding, knowledge, synthesis, and creative thinking; rationale provides a developed and convincing explanation for inclusion; portfolio overall is well-written, well-designed, and transformative, presents a coherent and compelling case of achievement.
Proficient	Evidence selected shows an acceptable degree of understanding, knowledge, synthesis, and/or creative thinking; rationale provides a clear and acceptable explanation for inclusion; portfolio overall is well-written and well-organized, presents a coherent case of achievement.
Emerging	Evidence selected shows a moderate degree of understanding, knowledge, and/or performance; rationale may be incomplete or inconsistent, provides an underdeveloped explanation for inclusion; portfolio overall shows effort at organization but is not yet a fully developed case of achievement; quality of writing is inconsistent.
Unacceptable	Evidence selected shows minimal degree of understanding, knowledge, and/or performance; rationale provides little and/or irrelevant explanation for inclusion; portfolio overall is not yet organized to present a case; quality of writing interferes with ideas. May be too little to assess.

Assignment Checklist (required for Individual Submissions)

Please read the checklist below following the completion of your assignment. Once you have verified these points, hand in this signed checklist with your assignment.

1. I have referenced and footnoted all ideas, words or other intellectual property from other sources used in the completion of this assignment.
2. I have included a proper bibliography, which includes acknowledgement of all sources used to complete this assignment.
3. This assignment was completed by my own efforts and I did not collaborate with any other person for ideas or answers.
4. This is the first time I have submitted this assignment or essay (partially or entirely) for academic evaluation.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Student ID: _____

List of Supplies Recommended for Students to Bring to Huntsville

Clothing

Please be sure to pack clothing suitable for the weather. Be sure to consider snow, sun, wind, and cold when preparing your wardrobe.

- Warm clothes that can be layered
- Extra Socks – wool, polypropylene, etc. (not cotton)
- Long Underwear (not cotton)
- Hiking/waterproof/winter boots
- Snowpants and winter jacket
- Flipflops (for shower)
- Winter hat, gloves, scarf
- Sunglasses
- Undergarments

Equipment

- Backpack
- Water bottle
- Insulated mug
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Camera (if you have)
- Computer, charger
- Composition book (ruled)
- Notebook (not the same as the composition book), stationary, clipboard

Linen

Basic linen is provided however additional blankets, pillows, and room decorations can also be brought from home for your added comfort

- Towels
- Additional pillows or blankets

Basic Toiletries

- Soap, shampoo, etc.
- Hygiene products
- Toothbrush and paste
- Kleenex
- Medications, if necessary (EpiPen, inhalers, etc.) – these should be with you at all times.
- Change and detergent for laundry

Other Comforts

- Music and players
- Musical instruments
- Sports equipment (skiis, snowshoes, toboggans)
- Skates (pond rink within view of Centre!)
- Movies, books, games
- Art supplies
- Snacks

Meals at the Summit Centre

Meals at the Summit Centre:

As part of course fees students will be provided catered lunches and dinners every day for the duration of the course. Meals begin with dinner on the first day and end with lunch on the last day. It is the responsibility of the students to provide their own breakfasts.

**Please fill out the form provided for allergies (and their severity) and related medications.

Additionally please fill out the following form for other meal considerations:

Name: _____

Please list any dietary restrictions you have (i.e. vegan, vegetarian, and/or foods for religious observances):

Please submit this form to Patti Bester (EV2 2012) by Friday, January 24th, 2014. Failure to receive this documentation by the date request will result in limited meal selection to cater to your specific needs.