

University of Toronto
Department of Geography & Program in Planning
JUG 320 H1F The Canadian Wilderness

Course Director: Ryan Hackett

Contact: Sidney Smith Hall Room 5061, ryan.hackett@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Mondays 1-2pm, or by appointment

I encourage you to ask questions in class, or during office hours. I will attempt to respond to emails within 48 hours, excluding holidays and weekends.

Teaching Assistant: Victor Lorentz

Time & Location: Monday and Wednesday 2-4pm. Sidney Smith 2127

Course description:

Canada's national identity has been, and continues to be, highly bound to ideas of wilderness and nature. Often referred to as "the great white north", Canada's national symbols are reflective of specific national narratives about nature, wilderness and landscape (e.g. the maple leaf, the beaver, currency adorned with wildlife). Drawing on conceptual tools from critical human-environment geography this course explores the ways in which particular representations of nature have been employed in Canadian nation building. Specifically, this course will introduce students to the ways in which nature and wilderness are both socially constructed and materially produced, and we will explore how ideas of Canadian wilderness and nature have been used to define the boundaries of 'authentic' Canadian identity and the nation.

Combining critical analysis of cultural representations of Canadian wilderness in art, literature, and film with grounded empirical examples of the impact of wilderness discourses in the realm of conservation, economic development, and urban planning, the course aims to familiarize students both cultural studies and political economy approaches to the geographic study of Canadian wilderness and its connections to nation, nationalism and belonging. The course aims to de-naturalize and politicize our understanding of Canadian wilderness and to explore the complex intersections of wilderness, power and politics.

Learning Objectives:

The specific objectives of this course are that students will be able to:

1. Recognize the ways in which wilderness is both discursively and materially produced.
2. Identify and understand some of the dominant narratives and themes associated with discussions of Canadian wilderness.
3. Identify and understand the relationship between wilderness narratives and the boundaries of 'authentic' Canadian identity and conceptions of the nation.
4. Identify and understand the influence of wilderness narratives in relation to social, political and economic activities and policies.
5. To be able to identify key course concepts and apply them in new contexts.

Skill Acquisition:

In addition to the objectives listed above, this course is also intended to develop your skills in:

1. Critical reading
2. Academic research activities
3. Clear, concise, and effective writing

Course Format:

We will meet twice a week, Monday and Wednesday from 2-4 pm in Sidney Smith 2127. The format will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and occasional videos and films.

Evaluation:

Reading reflections (4 worth 5% each): 20%
Essay outline 5%
Essay: 35%
Attendance & participation 5%
Final exam: 35%

Details on Evaluation Components:**Reading reflections (Ongoing)**

Each week a question related to the readings will be provided to students. These questions are intended to help guide your reading and you should come to class prepared to discuss the question. On four occasions you will be asked to prepare a short written reflection on the assigned readings (250-500 words max.). A schedule of due dates for reading reflections is listed in the syllabus. There are six weeks assigned for reflections. It is your choice which four you would like to complete. These reflections should briefly address the question for the week, but also provide an opportunity for you to pose questions of your own or to discuss elements of the reading that were most interesting to you. I will provide an example and go over my expectations for reading reflections in class. Reading reflections are to be sent to me via email by 10am the day that they are due. No late submissions will be accepted (since these assignments are meant to reflect your thinking about the readings *before* class discussion). Students who are unable to complete a reading reflection due to documented illness or non-medical emergency should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternate accommodations.

Essay outline (due June 2nd)

Students will be required to complete a brief outline of their essay. The rationale for submitting an outline is to provide students with advice and feedback prior to submitting their final paper. The outline should be brief (1-2 pages) and provide a description of the essay's main argument, its relation to course themes and material, as well as a preliminary bibliography identifying some of the research materials the students have, or will be, consulting in the preparation of their paper.

Essay Assignment (due June 18th)

Students will be assigned the task of producing an essay related to course themes. The essay will be approximately 2000-2,500 words in length, and will be expected to conform to the conventions of academic writing, including a clear thesis, reasoned and substantiated argumentation, and the use of scholarly references. Further details will be provided in class.

Final Exam (Last week of June)

A final exam will be held during the summer exam period at the end of June. The exam will cover material from the entire course. It will test your knowledge of both readings and material presented in lectures, and your ability to synthesize material from different sections of the course. The exam will consist of a mix of short answer and essay style questions.

Participation and attendance (Ongoing)

Participation and attendance are critical to your success in this course. Full lecture content cannot be posted online. Regular attendance will also provide you with opportunities to engage in discussions with your peers and to ask questions. Your grade for this component will be based on random attendance checks and your participation in the class.

Detailed Reading and Lecture Schedule

Texts: Required readings for this course are a mix of journal articles and book chapters. All of the assigned readings will be posted to Blackboard. In addition to being posted on Blackboard all of the assigned reading material is also available electronically through University of Toronto Libraries, or is on course reserve at Robarts library.

Additional or substitute readings may be assigned during the course. Students will be provided with advance notice of any changes to required readings.

Section A - Introduction: Conceptual Foundations and Critical Tools

Week One

May 12: The Canadian wilderness. Course themes, outline, and expectations.

Recommended reading: Wentze, M. (2009). How I became a real Canadian. *The Globe & Mail*, June 27 pp. A25. Available online at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/how-i-became-a-real-canadian/article787368/>

May 14: Problematizing wilderness. The discursive and material construction of nature.

Cronon, W. (1996). The trouble with wilderness: Or, getting back to the wrong nature. *Environmental History*, 1 (1), 7-28.

Loo, T. (2001). Making a modern wilderness: conserving wildlife in twentieth century Canada. *Canadian Historical Review*, 82 (1), 92-121.

Section B - Cultural representations of Canadian Wilderness

Week Two

May 19: University closed for Victoria Day

May 21: Visual arts: Wilderness and nation (Reading reflection due at 10 am)

Braun, B. (2002). BC Seeing\Seeing BC: Vision and Visuality on Canada's West Coast. In *The intemperate rainforest: Nature, culture and power on Canada's west coast*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 156 - 212.

Week Three

May 26: Wilderness in Canadian literature (reading reflection due at 10 am)

Atwood, M. (1991). Wilderness tips. In *Wilderness Tips*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart. 197-216.

Milligan, R. & McCreary, T. (2011). Inscription, innocence, and invisibility: Early contributions to the discursive formation of the north in Samuel Hearne's *A Journey to the Northern Ocean*. In Baldwin, A., Cameron, L., and Kobayashi, A. [eds.] *Rethinking the great white north. Race, nature, and the historical geographies of whiteness in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press. Pp. 147-168.

May 28: Wilderness films and videos (Reading reflection due at 10am)

Wilson, A. (1991). Looking at the non-human: Nature movies and TV. In *The culture of nature: North American landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez*. Toronto: Between the Lines. pp. 117-155.

Film: TBA

Section C - Political and Economic Dynamics

Week Four

June 2: Parks and protected areas (Reading reflection due at 10am)

Sandlos, J. (2008). Not wanted in the boundary: The expulsion of the Keeseekoowenin Ojibway Band from Riding Mountain National Park. *Canadian Historical Review*, 89 (2), pp. 189-221.

Sandilands, C. (2009). The cultural politics of ecological integrity: nature and nation in Canada's National Parks, 1885-2000. *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 39-40, pp. 161-189.

Documentary film: Nature's invitation (2012). Brandy Y productions.

June 4: Aboriginal perspectives on conservation: Land claims and treaty rights

Murray, G., & King, L. (2012). First Nations values in protected area governance: Tla-o-qui-aht tribal parks and Pacific Rim national park reserve. *Human Ecology*, 40(3), 385-395.

Bennett, N., Lemelin, R.H., & Ellis, S. (2010). Aboriginal and local perspectives on the community benefits of conservation: A case study of a proposed Canadian national park and the Lutsel k'e Dene First Nation. *Geography Research Forum*, 30, pp. 169-187.

Videos & Multimedia:

Lutsel k'e First Nation and Thaidene Nene (Land of our ancestors)

Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks

Week Five

June 9: Natural resources (Reading reflection due at 10am)

McCreary, T. & Milligan, R. (2014). Pipelines, permits, and protests: Carrier Sekani encounters with the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project. *Cultural Geographies* 21 (1), pp. 115-129.

Keeling, A. (2010). 'Born in an atomic test tube': Landscapes of cyclonic development at Uranium City, Saskatchewan. *The Canadian Geographer*, 54 (2), pp. 228-252.

Video: CBC news interview with MP Joe Oliver.

June 12: Canadian wilderness and global environmental change (Reading reflection due 10am)

Baldwin, A. (2009). Carbon nullius and racial rule: Race, nature, and the cultural politics of forest carbon in Canada. *Antipode*, 41 (2), pp. 231-255.

Cameron, E. (2012). Securing Indigenous politics: a critique of the vulnerability and adaptation approach to the human dimensions of climate change in the Canadian Arctic, *Global Environmental Change* 22 (1), pp. 103-114.

Please read the executive summary and browse through the following report:

Carlson, M., Wells, J., Roberts, D. (2009). *The Carbon the World Forgot: Conserving the Capacity of Canada's Boreal Forest Region to Mitigate and Adapt to Climate Change*. Boreal Songbird Initiative and

Canadian Boreal Initiative, Seattle, WA, and Ottawa. Available online at <http://www.borealbirds.org/carbonreport.shtml>

Week Six

June 16: Nature in the city

Wekerle, G., Sandberg, A., Gilbert, L. and Binstock, M. (2007). Nature as a Cornerstone of Growth? Regional and ecosystems planning in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Supplement, pp. 20-38.

Sandilands, C. (2013). Dog stranglers in the National Park? National and vegetal politics in Ontario's Rouge Valley. *Journal of Canadian Studies* 47(3), 93-122.

Film: TBA

June 18: Relevance and review (*Essay due in class before 2:15pm*)

Wente, M. (2011). They hijacked the humanities, then my canoe. *The Globe & Mail*. Oct. 22. Available online at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/they-hijacked-the-humanities-then-my-canoe/article4255598/>.

The Feminist Geography Collective (2011). In defence of geography and our space for critical thinking. An open letter to Margaret Wente. *The Mark*. Oct. 25. Available online at <http://pioneers.themarknews.com/articles/7198-an-open-letter-to-margaret-wente/#.U1xDQ9JOVjo>

Administrative items:

Course Blackboard: The course will use blackboard to communicate messages and announcements to the class and to post links to resources for students. I will also post my lecture slides to Blackboard following the lecture. Lecture slides will often contain minimal information, may not be self-explanatory, and will not contain information arising from class discussions. As such, the posted lecture slides are not a good substitute for regular attendance in lecture. Students should consult Blackboard on a regular basis throughout the term for important course information, updates, and announcements.

Communications policy: I expect that students will use their University of Toronto email addresses for all communications related to the course. Alternative email addresses may be filtered as spam. All email communications from me will be sent to your University of Toronto email address. Please place the course code JUG 320 in the subject line of all emails that you send.

Accessibility: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any concerns about accessibility please contact Accessibility Services <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>.

Assignment Submissions: Essays are to be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of the class on June 16th. Any assignments submitted after the first ten minutes of class (after 2:10pm) will be subject to a late penalty. If you will be absent from class please contact me in advance to discuss alternative submission arrangements.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day. Weekends will count as one day. Late papers must be submitted in hard copy to the drop box located outside of the Department of Geography main office, Sidney Smith Hall 5047. The office is open Monday-Friday until 5pm, but may

close earlier prior to statutory holidays. Please arrive well in advance of 5pm to ensure your paper is received on time.

Extensions will be granted sparingly for illness or other non-medical emergencies. For illness you must have a health care professional fill out the official University of Toronto medical form available online at <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/>. If you miss an assignment deadline due to illness or a non-medical emergency please email the instructor as soon as possible, and no later than one week after the assignment deadline. Please consult your College Registrar's Office and notify the instructor if your progress is being interrupted by non-medical emergencies (i.e. family or personal crises). Your College Registrar's Office may be able to provide you with a note for non-medical emergencies.

Exam: The final exam for this course will take place during the formal exam period in the last week of June and will be scheduled by the Office of the Faculty Registrar. Students who miss the final exam will need to petition to the Faculty through their College Registrar's Office for an opportunity to write a deferred exam.

Students Encountering Problems: If you encounter problems during the term that may impact your success in the course (prolonged illness, family or personal crises, etc.) please contact your College Registrar's Office. Your College Registrar's Office is a good first point of contact for students seeking advice on nearly all subjects.

Grade Reassessment Requests: If you think that there has been an error in grading a particular piece of work you may request a re-evaluation. Requests for re-evaluation should be made to the teaching assistant or course instructor as soon as possible, and no later than two weeks after the work was returned. Students requesting a re-appraisal will be asked to submit a short written rationale for the request identifying the areas of the work that they believe were not properly evaluated. Students should be aware that requests for re-evaluation may result in the grade being raised, lowered, or confirmed.

Academic Integrity: Please familiarize yourself with University of Toronto policies on academic integrity. Details can be found online at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students>. Breaches of academic integrity may encompass a number of offenses including, but not limited to, plagiarism, including false or misleading references in your work, or unauthorized re-submission of previous work. I will review my expectations and the basics of proper referencing in class, and will post helpful resources to Blackboard. Suspected breaches of academic integrity will be investigated.

Electronic devices: Students may use laptops and tablets solely for note taking purposes and should not be connected to the internet. Please be reasonable and respectful in your use of these devices. Your use of a tablet or laptop should not interfere with other students or the instructor, nor with your ability to learn. Phones, cameras, and other electronic devices are not permitted without prior consent of the course instructor.

Audio Recordings: Students may, with the prior consent of the course instructor, create audio recordings of course lectures for their own personal use. Such accommodations do not provide permission for permanent retention of this material or its transmission to others. This means that students cannot share these files with others in any format, nor distribute them via the internet, social network sites, or other distribution methods. Non-compliance with these terms violate the intellectual property rights of the instructor and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating these terms will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Student Code of Conduct.

Students should note that because audio recordings are permitted in class their voice may be recorded by other students. Please speak to the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Important Sessional Dates:

June 9: Last day to drop courses with F section codes from academic record and GPA. After this deadline a mark is recorded for each course, whether course work is completed or not. Note that some courses cannot be cancelled using the SWS and students must contact their College or Department to do so.

June 20: Deadline to request Late Withdrawal (LWD) from F section code courses at College Registrar's Office.

June 27: Last day to file a petition regarding term work in 2014 summer session F section code courses.

July 4: Last day to file a petition regarding a final examination in 2014 summer session F section code courses.