

GGR300 Managing Urban Nature

Instructor: Prof. Sue Ruddick
Office Hours: Tuesday 3 pm – 5 pm or by appointment Sidney Smith Hall 5059
Course Time & Place: Tuesday 12 pm – 2 pm Room 161 University College
Contact Information: ruddick@geog.utoronto.ca

Course Description

Until quite recently the concept of urban-nature was thought to be an oxymoron: the urban was thought to be a non-natural space and the boundaries between the “urban” and the “natural” were patrolled through planning and design. As William Cronon suggests, we once carefully partitioned our national landscape into urban places rural places and wilderness. In this course, we explore competing discourses and historical shifts in thinking about the relationship between what we consider as “urban” or “nature.” We will investigate how these different ideas have been made manifest in the landscape, in features such as the evolution of urban parks and nature reserves, the renaturing of urban rivers, protection of environmentally sensitive areas, green roofs, and renaturing of suburban lawns, and how they are continuously contested in thought and practice. With a primary focus on North American cities we will explore the challenges and opportunities of managing urban nature in cities in circumstances of growth and decline.

Course material will include a mixture of scholarly articles and planning tools and initiatives.

Course Objectives

1. To introduce students to competing conceptualizations of urban nature and their historical origins.
2. To critically engage different conceptual framings of urban nature and the ways these framings are manifest in policies and planning practices with particular focus on North American cities.
3. To explore unintended consequences and challenges of different approaches.

Assignments

October 17	Mid-term test in class	20%
October 31	Research Paper -- Proposal	10%
December 5	Research Paper	35%
Final Exam	DURING EXAM PERIOD	35%

Required course texts

This course uses Blackboard. All course materials, including course syllabus, assignments, course readings and other supplementary materials will be made available on Blackboard. The course instructor will frequently post materials on Blackboard, so students should check the course site regularly.

Course Policies

Email

Communication with students will be through their utoronto.ca email address. Students should check their utoronto email regularly for communications through Blackboard. All email communications with the instructor should be brief and courteous. Please do not expect an immediate reply to your email, but every effort will be made to get back to you within 48 hours (weekends not included). **All email correspondence should have GGR300 clearly identified in the subject heading or the email will not be read.** Assignments will **not** be accepted by email.

Course Format

This course will include lectures and class discussions which will engage and expand upon the assigned readings. In addition to scholarly literature, we will on occasion explore planning practices and policies addressing topics of concern. Lectures will be supplemented by video and film clips, and perhaps even by guest speakers.

In Class Attendance and Discussion

You must come to class having done the readings. Unless otherwise specified you are expected to cover all the readings assigned for a given week. While there is no grade for in class attendance it is strongly recommended that you come to every class. In class we will be discussing material that is supplemental to the course readings and you will be tested on this material in the midterm exam and final exam.

In Class Etiquette

Cell Phones: All cell phones must be turned off and put away during class time.

Laptops: I discourage use of laptops in class for the purposes of note taking. You may take written notes and you may record the lecture/discussion to review at a later date. The reasons for this are pedagogical: Studies by Cornell University show that students retain fully 70%-80% of the lecture material when they have to take notes by hand – writing calls on you to listen and condense the key aspects of the argument. Students who type the lecture verbatim retain only around 20% of what has been talked about.

In class discussion: In class discussion and debate should be attentive to and respectful of differing points of view. For part of the class you will be expected to participate in in class discussion. Not everyone is comfortable speaking in public. If you find you have difficulties speaking in public, please feel free to see me during office hours – I can recommend several strategies to help you overcome this.

Assignments:

All written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day specified.

Please note: There is a penalty of 5% per day (including weekends) for late assignments and essays. Assignments submitted on the due date, but not at the beginning of the lecture period, will be penalized by 2%. Late assignments will not be accepted after one week without a valid medical certificate. **Late assignments should be submitted and date-stamped in the main Geography and Planning office on the fifth floor of Sid Smith.** Neither the course instructor nor the teaching assistant will be held responsible for any late course assignments or essays that go missing. Be sure to retain a copy of your paper and keep all your notes and drafts. Written assignments should be submitted at the beginning of class in paper format **and** in electronic format via TURNITIN.COM.

Submission of assignments via TURNITIN.COM

TURNITIN allows a comparison of textual assignments in order to detect possible plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their essays via TURNITIN.COM. A University of Toronto repository will be set up for the submission and storage of your essay. The details for uploading your document will be provided with the description of the research paper proposal. If you have any objections to the use of TURNITIN please discuss them with me – an alternative arrangement will be made, but it will require the submission of extensive notes and drafts of your proposal and final paper.

“Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.”

Mid-term exam:

The mid-term exam offers the opportunity to consolidate and demonstrate your understanding of different approaches to managing urban nature before reflecting on these critically in your essay proposal and final essay. The exam will be in class for a duration of two hours.

Research Paper Proposal:

The proposal should identify a topic relevant to the course and engage at least two competing philosophies of urban nature, their related approaches in management and their strengths and limitations. A selection of possible essay topics will be provided early in the course, but students are encouraged to select their own topic as long as it engages with the themes of the course. All students must prepare a written essay proposal to be submitted in class on **Tuesday, October 31 2017**. The proposal must set out the general topic to be addressed; a tentative thesis statement; a brief statement regarding how the essay will relate to the course materials; and a preliminary bibliography. A sample essay proposal will be available on Blackboard.

Final Essay:

A final research essay of 2000 words (about eight pages) is due on the last day of class, **Tuesday, December 5, 2017**. The research essay is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability to critically reflect on the course materials and engage a current issue relevant to planning policy and practice.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The assignments that you submit must be your own work.

Plagiarism: Using information directly from sources such as books, articles, videos, the Internet or work of fellow students without proper citation is considered plagiarism. Whenever you use someone else’s words, quotation marks must be used, and the quote must be properly sourced. This also applies to paraphrasing information from other sources.

Please consult “How not to plagiarize” (online at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize/>) before undertaking your assignments. This site has some very helpful distinctions

around what kinds of knowledge must be cited as well as advice more generally on writing (planning, researching, revising, time management et cetera. You cannot submit an academic work which has received credit in other courses (or which is currently under submission for credit to other courses). Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. These are serious academic offenses and they carry severe sanctions. The university's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters is set out in <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf> We expect you to adhere to this code.

SYLLABUS

(draft – some readings may change)

Sept 12

Week 1: INTRODUCTION

(review of syllabus, course objectives and assignments)

Dreams and Nightmares

Sept 19

Week 2: THE GREEN CITY – Utopia or dystopia?

Wolch, Jennifer. 2007. "Green Urban Worlds." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97 (2): 373-384

Beatley, Timothy and Peter Newman. 2013. "Biophilic Cities are Sustainable, Resilient Cities." *Sustainability* 5 (8): 3328-3345.

Hodson, Mike and Simon Marvin. 2010. "Urbanism in the Anthropocene: Ecological Urbanism Or Premium Ecological Enclaves?" *City* 14 (3): 298-313.

Issues and Approaches – Managing Urban Nature in Theory

Sept 26

Week 3: Metabolizing Natures (approaches in political economy)

Bridge, Gary and Sophie Watson. 2000. *A Companion to the City*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Chapter 47 Swyngedouw, Eric and Maria Kaika "The Environment of the City . . . or Urbanizing Nature" 567-580

Rees, William and Mathis Wackernagel. 1996. "Urban Ecological Footprints: Why Cities Cannot be sustainable—And Why they are a Key to Sustainability." *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 16 (4): 223-248

Oct 3

Week 4: Monetizing Natures (ecosystem services)

Gómez-Baggethun, Erik and Manuel Ruiz-Pérez. 2011. "Economic Valuation and the Commodification of Ecosystem Services." *Progress in Physical Geography* 35 (5): 613-628.

Schötter, M., van der Zanden E.H., van Oudenhoven A.P.E., R. P. Remme, H. Serna-Chavez, de Groot R.S., and P. Opdam. 2014. "Ecosystem Services as a Contested Concept: A Synthesis of Critique and Counter-Arguments." *Conservation Letters* 7 (6): 514-523.

Oct 10

Week 5: Recentring Natures – biocentric approaches

Wolch, Jennifer, 1996. "Zoöpolis." *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 7 (2): 21-47.

Nadasdy, Paul. 2016. "First Nations, Citizenship and Animals, Or Why Northern Indigenous People might Not Want to Live in Zoopolis." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 49 (1): 1.

City of Toronto Booklets on Biodiversity

Oct 17

Week 6: MID TERM TEST – location TBA

Managing urban natures – practices and consequences

Oct 24

Week 7: Commodification – Natural Capital

Escobedo, Francisco J., Timm Kroeger, and John E. Wagner. 2011. "Urban Forests and Pollution Mitigation: Analyzing Ecosystem Services and Disservices."

Environmental Pollution 159 (8): 2078-2087

Urban Forests: The Value of Trees in The City of Toronto. Toronto Dominion Bank.

Oct 31

Week 8: Pest Control

Shaw, Ian Graham Ronald, Paul F. Robbins, and John Paul Jones. 2010. "A Bug's Life and the Spatial Ontologies of Mosquito Management." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 100 (2): 373-392.

Foster, Jennifer and L. Anders Sandberg. 2004. "Friends Or Foe? Invasive Species and Public Green Space in Toronto." *Geographical Review* 94 (2): 178-198.

Nov 7 Week 9: NO CLASS – READING WEEK

Nov 14

Week 10: Limits to Green -- Gentrification

Checker, Melissa. 2011. "Wiped Out by the "Greenwave": Environmental Gentrification and the Paradoxical Politics of Urban Sustainability: Wiped Out by the "Greenwave"." *City & Society* 23 (2): 210-229.

Curran, Winifred and Trina Hamilton. 2012. "Just Green enough: Contesting Environmental Gentrification in Greenpoint, Brooklyn." *Local Environment* 17 (9): 1027.

Sandberg, L. A. and Gerda R. Wekerle. 2010. "Reaping Nature's Dividends: The Neoliberalization and Gentrification of Nature on the Oak Ridges Moraine." *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning* 12 (1): 41-57.

Nov 21

Week 11: Creating natures

Yokohari, Makoto and Marco Amati. 2005. "Nature in the City, City in the Nature: Case Studies of the Restoration of Urban Nature in Tokyo, Japan and Toronto, Canada." *Landscape and Ecological Engineering* 1 (1): 53-59.

Foster, Jennifer. 2007. Toronto's Leslie Street Spit. Aesthetics and the Ecology of Marginal Land. *Environmental Philosophy* 4(1&2): 117-133.

Nov 28

Week 12: Connecting Habitats

Brown, Rebecca and Glenn Harris. 2005. "Comanagement of Wildlife Corridors: The Case for Citizen Participation in the Algonquin to Adirondack Proposal." *Journal of Environmental Management* 74 (2): 97-106

Quinby, Peter et. al. 1999. Opportunities for Wildlife Habitat Connectivity between Algonquin Park, Ontario and the Adirondack Park, New York. prepared for The Greater Laurentian Wildlands Project South Burlington, Vermont

Environmentally Significant Areas in the City of Toronto 2012. Prepared for the City of Toronto Planning Division.

Dec 5

Week 13: Wrap up – Discussion of preparation for Final Exam

Final Paper Due in Class