

## Women and the Environment

### WMST 4250

Spring Semester 2008, M, W, F, 10:10-11:15 a.m.

Instructor: Dr. Cecilia Herles

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#### Required Texts:

1. Packet from Bel-Jean Copy, 163 E. Broad Street (706) 548-3648

Reserve: Mary Joy Breton's Women Pioneers for the Environment. Boston: Northeastern, 1998.

#### Course objectives:

This course will be examining the wide range of issues involved in considering the possible relations between 'woman' and 'nature'. Topics of interest that will be covered in the course may include, but are not limited to the following: ecological feminism, development, sustainability, environmental health issues, environmental racism, and activism.

#### Course structure:

The course will utilize a variety of materials, ranging from philosophical texts to films. Students will be expected to think critically about the material and to participate in class actively throughout the course.

#### Assignments and grading:

**Class participation (20%)** Attendance and class participation is required. Participation will be evaluated on a daily basis and the final participation grade will be based on an A-F plus/minus grading scale. Students will be evaluated on class discussion as well as occasional writing assignments related to the readings. Examples of writing assignments include general questions and short answers about readings, journal entries, brief summaries and critiques of readings.

In accordance with the University policy, the students will be graded according to this plus/minus scale:

100-94= A	89-86= B+	82-80 =B-	75-73 =C	69-60= D
90-93=A-	85-83= B	79-76 =C+	72-70 =C-	59 and below= F

The students who will be evaluated most highly:

- 1) Demonstrate that they have read and thought about the material assigned for the class.
- 2) Demonstrate that they listen to their peers and build upon their ideas.
- 3) Develop questions or topics for discussion.
- 4) Develop a critical analysis of the material.

**Discussion Leader (10%)** Each student will be required to lead the discussion on a discussion day. Be prepared to give a 10-15 minute presentation of the material and

to facilitate the discussion for the day. You should be prepared to explain the main points of the material to the class, and to generate questions for group discussion. In accordance with the University policy, the students will be graded according to the previously listed plus/minus scale.

The students who will be evaluated most highly:

- 1) Clearly explain the material assigned for the class.
- 2) Illustrate how this material relates to topics covered in the class.
- 3) Develop questions or topics for discussion.
- 4) Demonstrate that they listen to their peers and build upon their ideas and questions.
- 5) Develop a critical analysis of the material.

**Current Events analysis (10%) Current events analysis is due at the beginning of class on Friday February 22.**

In an effort to make this course relevant to your everyday lives, we will examine environmental issues in current events. Find a newspaper or magazine article that deals with the environment. Attach this article to a typed, double-spaced account of the article (no more than three pages) including: a short summary of the article, how the article relates to the class, and your perspective on the issue. Failure to include any of the above items at the beginning of class on February 22 will result in loss of points. You may also use print or television advertisements, but if you cannot provide the ad, you must also summarize the characters, plot, and product.

In your analysis, you will be expected to think critically about the issue and clearly explain how it relates to the class. Be prepared to present your analysis to the class. In accordance with the University policy, the students will be graded according to the previously listed plus/minus scale.

The students who will be evaluated most highly:

- 1) Clearly explain the issue in the analysis and presentation.
- 2) Illustrate how the article relates to the class.
- 3) Develop a critical analysis of the material.

**Activist Presentation (10%)** Students will be required to select and present material on women environmental activists. These presentations may cover one specific activist or a group, and the length of the presentation should be approximately 8-10 minutes long.

Presentations take place on Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, Friday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. You will sign up for a presentation on one of these dates and you must present your chosen activist on this date in order to receive credit for your presentation.

In accordance with the University policy, the students will be graded according to the previously listed plus/minus scale.

The students who will be evaluated most highly:

- 1) Clearly explain the activist work
- 2) Illustrate how this work relates to the class.
- 3) Develop questions or topics for discussion.

**Group project (20%)** Throughout the course, students are required to organize into a group and work together on a subject of interest that is closely related to the course. **The instructor must approve these topics by Monday, March 31.**

Creativity is encouraged. The project can involve a wide range of activities, such as forming campaigns and petitions, organizing an activist group and creating its agendas, setting up a seminar or workshop, creating a newsletter or zine, making a

video, etc. This project is not limited to traditional forms of academic work. Towards the end of the semester, students will be expected to present their projects to the class. The group projects will be presented on April 14, April 16, and April 18, and students must present on the assigned day in order to receive credit for this project. This cooperative learning experience will receive a grade from the instructor and from the individuals in the group through a confidential evaluation. This method is used to encourage full group participation.

**Final Paper (30%)** Students are required to write a research paper (approximately 8-10 typed pages, double-spaced) on a topic of interest closely related to the course. **Students must have an approved written proposal on the paper by Friday, March 7th.** These written proposals will count 10% of your paper grade. Students are advised to arrange a meeting with the instructor regarding the paper topic as early as possible. **First drafts of papers are due at the beginning of class on Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>.** These will count 20% of your paper grade. **Final papers MUST BE HANDED IN BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON FRIDAY, APRIL 25<sup>th</sup>.** Your final draft will count 60% of your paper grade. Your presentation of your final paper will count 10% of your paper grade. Late papers will not be accepted. In accordance with the University policy, the students will be graded according to the previously listed plus/minus scale.

The students who will be evaluated most highly:

- 1) Research a creative topic and clearly explain the research.
- 2) Illustrate how the topic relates to the class.
- 3) Develop a critical analysis of the material.
- 4) Write clearly, proof read the paper, and give proper citations.

#### Week one: Introductions

Monday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, Introductions

Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, Rodda Ch. 2

Friday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, Rodda, Ch. 3

#### Week two: Women and the Environment

Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, Rodda Ch.4

Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, Rodda Ch.5

Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, Warren, Chapter 1 from Ecofeminist Philosophy

#### Week three: Ecofeminism

Monday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, No class (MLK day)

Wednesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, Warren Chapter 2 from Ecofeminist Philosophy

Friday, January 25, Warren, Power and Promise of Ecofeminism

#### Week four: Ecofeminism

Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, Ursula LeGuin, "Women/Wilderness" (Presentations)

Wednesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, Cuomo, Ch. 1 The Ecofeminist Project

Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, Cuomo, "Ethics and the Eco/feminist Self"

#### Week five: Connection between Women and Animals

Monday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, Plumwood, "Nature, Self, and Gender"

Wednesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, Hand-out, Gruen, "Dismantling Oppressions: An Analysis of the Connection between Women and Animals,

Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, Presentations, discuss papers and sign up for group projects

#### Week six

Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, Film TBA

Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, Film TBA

Friday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, Film TBA and group projects meeting

Week seven: Environmental Justice

Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, Bunyan Bryant, "History and Issues of the Environmental Justice Movement"

Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, Bullard, Ch. 5 "Environmental Racism Revisited"  
(Presentations)

Friday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Current events analysis presentations. Copies of the article and analysis are due at the beginning of class.**

Week eight: Race, Class, Gender

Monday, February 25<sup>th</sup> Andy Smith, "Ecofeminism through an Anticolonial Framework"

Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, Hand-out, Taylor, "Women of Color, Environmental Justice, and Ecofeminism"

Friday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, Presentations and meeting about paper topics

Week nine: Ecology is a Sistah's Issue too

Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, Riley, "Ecology is a Sistah's Issue too"

Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, Miller, Hallstein, and Quass, "Feminist Politics and Environmental Justice"

Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, **Deadline for final paper topics**, Julie Sze "Expanding Environmental Justice", and presentations

Week ten: Spring break

Spring break from March 12<sup>th</sup>-March 16<sup>th</sup>

Week eleven: The International Connection

Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, Presentations and group projects meeting

Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> Perfecto, "Pesticide Exposure of Farm Workers and the International Connection"

Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, Shiva, "Development, Ecology, and Women"

Week twelve: Reproductive Choices

Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, Cuomo, "Ecofeminism, Deep Ecology, and Human Population"

Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, Presentations and Group projects meeting

Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, Hawkins, "Reproductive Choices: The Ecological Dimension"

Week thirteen

Monday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, Discuss papers and group project

Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Discuss papers and group project

Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, Group projects meeting

Week fourteen

Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, **First drafts of papers due.**

Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, Hand-out, Hurricane Katrina

Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, Group projects meetings and presentations

Week fifteen

Monday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, **Group project**

Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, **Group project**

Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, **Group project**

Week sixteen

Monday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, **Hand back paper drafts and discuss papers**

Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, TBA

Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, **Final paper is due and paper presentations**

Week Sixteen

Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, last class.