

Environment, Gender, and Politics (EGP)

WGST 3930:02 – POLS 3930:01 -- Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Robert A. Strikwerda

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Office Hours: M, T & R 1:30 to 3:00 pm or by appointment

Class meets T&R 11:00 – 12:15 pm Beracha Hall 221 Email: robert.strikwerda@slu.edu

Environmental issues – from deforestation, to plastic waste, to climate change -- present some of the most vexing challenges of our time. Many have said that we are failing at all levels of political and social action and organization—at least in the West. This class will investigate responses at the level of personal beliefs (ecofeminism, spirituality), the level of individual and local activism, the level of state and national government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and finally at the international level. Students will write short reaction pieces, position papers, and personal essays. Particular emphasis will be given to the role of gender in the causation, effects, exacerbation, and possible resolutions of environmental problems.

Texts:

- Rosemary Radford Ruether. *Integrating Ecofeminism, Globalization and World Religions*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.
- Bill McKibben. *Falter: Has the Human Game Begun to Play Itself Out?* NY: Henry Holt, 2019.

Course objectives:

Over the course of the semester, students should:

- become familiar with several areas of environmental controversy, particularly individual and national difficulties in addressing climate change adequately;
- become knowledgeable about the environmental views of several world religions and of various ecofeminist positions;
- account for some of the personal and political complexities of taking effective environmental action;
- develop thoughtful views of these areas and issues;
- develop a personal environmental ethic, including environmental activism; and
- create a collaborative classroom environment that supports constructive dialogue.

Some Questions to be Addressed:

- What are several forms of ecofeminism and how do they relate to feminism and to religious and secular views of the environment?
- Why has the U.S. population and political systems been so slow to recognize and address climate change, and other environmental problems?
- What are the prospects for changes nationally and internationally for improved views on environmental issues, especially climate change?
- What place might insights from ecofeminism play in coping with effects of extensive climate change?

Assessment / Requirements:

ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION (10%) is critical to both your success and the success of our class. Through proper preparation, active listening, asking and responding to questions, sharing ideas from your writing, and participating in classroom activities, you develop your own thinking and that of your classmates – and even your instructor! We will try to create and sustain a supportive classroom environment—one in which people are *always respected*, especially in their differences, and viewpoints are questioned only as a means to develop them better.

Sometimes after a class session you might have a “departee” moment – “I should have said!” or “Why didn’t I see that connection?” As an option, feel free to send them to me, or post these for the class on BB under “Further Thoughts”.

“SHOW AND TELLS” (2 * 3% = 6%) are informative 5-minute oral presentations at the beginning of class that a) share the contents of a news story, blog entry, work of art, etc., and b) link it to what we are learning in this course about EGP. At least half of your presentation time should be on connections to the course, rather than having us watch a video, etc., the whole time. Present one before and one after fall break. Let me know two days ahead of time of when and what you have to present. See the assignment sheet on Blackboard for detailed specs.

READING RESPONSES “Ps & Qs” (10 * 3% = 30%) take the form of 1 or 2 **P**oints of interest to you in the readings and 2 **Q**uestions you would like the class to discuss. You will be assigned readings. You will submit a total of 10 of these.

DUE: emailed by 9 am of day the readings are to be discussed, unless specified.

For full credit: all PQs must a) relate to issues of the course;

- b) have citations (brief quotes are good) to readings;
- c) be discussable, that is neither too general nor too specific;
- d) be on time – 9 am of class day reading is covered.

SHORT PAPERS (3 * 10% = 30%) on Ecofeminism, Environmental Activism, and a final response to McKibben's question "How do We Play the Human Game". These must show engagement with assigned readings. More details will be found on BB.

WORLD CLIMATE GAME (12%). How you participate in the game / class sessions will be 4 %; your journal 8 %. As you prepare and play this game you will keep a journal including how you intend to participate in each game session (class), your outline for any speech, your responses to each session, etc. and your post-mortem for the game.

COUNTRY PRESENTATION (12%) on a country of your choice, while ensuring geographic distribution. You will present 1) an overview of a country and 2) its political and environmental challenges, 3) its role in international negotiations, 4) the activities of both foreign and domestic NGOs, and 5) your assessment of its environmental future, using PowerPoint or similar form.

Penalties for Late or Omitted Submissions specified in instructions for each.

Assessment Summary:

The variety of assignments gives you the opportunity to be assessed using multiple forms of learning: participation; short writing assignments; and active participation in the "Trouble in Tortuga" and "World Climate Game." Rubrics or specific guidelines will be offered to guide your work.

WGS Portfolios are required of all WGS majors and encouraged for WGS minors).

WGS has an online portfolio program that is easy to set up and use. I will provide you with all the information you need to do so. WGS majors will add at least one of your projects and corresponding paper from this course to your portfolio. You may also want to use the portfolio to organize material from your other courses, but that is optional.

Electronic devices: To enhance learning, students will limit their use of electronic devices in class (including cell phones, tablets, and laptop computers) to what is essential for class. Do not distract yourself or your neighbors with online shopping, email, twitter, etc., during class!

Academic Integrity and Honesty: *Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.*

For SLU's policy see http://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/policy_academic-integrity_6-26-2015.pdf

Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to myself, Dr. Gretchen Arnold, chair of Women's and Gender Studies, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Dean/Director of the College, School or Center in which your program is housed.

Academic Support for Students

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center assists students with academic and career related services, is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite, 114). Students can visit www.slu.edu/success to learn more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning).

Disability Accommodations

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course.

Please contact Disability Services to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact Disability Services, located in the Student Success Center and available by email at Disability_services@slu.edu or by phone at [314.977.3484](tel:314.977.3484). Once approved, information about a student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from Disability Services and within the instructor's official course roster. Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one also are encouraged to contact Disability Services. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

Title IX protections

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; akratky@slu.edu; [314-977-3886](tel:314-977-3886)) and share the basic facts of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web addresses:

<http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy> www.slu.edu/here4you