

**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

**ENGLISH 517.20-02: OUR BODIES, OUR ENVIRONMENT**

Dr. Pamela Banting

Fall 2016

SS 1010, 403-220-5480, [pbanting@ucalgary.ca](mailto:pbanting@ucalgary.ca)

Classes: Tu/Th 3:30 to 4:45

Classroom: EDC 287

Office hours: Thursdays 1:30 to 2:30

Workers in China pollinating fruit trees by hand:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/humans-bees-china\\_us\\_570404b3e4b083f5c6092ba9?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=post&utm\\_term=bees&utm\\_campaign=Food&\\_surl\\_=IgNjy&\\_ots\\_=1461605869272&\\_step\\_=1](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/humans-bees-china_us_570404b3e4b083f5c6092ba9?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=post&utm_term=bees&utm_campaign=Food&_surl_=IgNjy&_ots_=1461605869272&_step_=1)

In this course we will study texts that explore interpenetrations between bodies and the environment. Is the environment merely a “setting” for the novels of our lives, a scenic backdrop for our photos, and an outdoor recreational facility? Is nature no more than a resource for the extraction of profit and a place for dumping waste? In literary studies, we often refer to *social constructions* of identities and bodies. Can we extend this work to take into account *environmental constructions* of our subjectivities? How do we ‘incorporate’ into our thinking about bodies and identities the effects of a healthy natural world as well as those of the effluents and toxins that penetrate *beneath* the ‘markers’ associated with skin? How does it *feel* to live downwind and/or downstream? What challenges does the toxic body present to our notions of subjectivity, agency and ability? Can nature play a role in physical, emotional and spiritual healing? How do our bodies relate to those of other animals? What will a post-natural world be like? What role does the environmental memoir play in social and environmental justice by bringing the effects of “slow violence” (Rob Nixon) to consciousness? Can poetry and poetic thinking help to save the planet? In this course we will explore the interfaces between our own energetic bodies and the environment to engage with topics such as subjectivity; agency; health and wellness; environmental illness; slow violence, environmental racism and environmental justice; an ecological ethic of caring; connections between cultural diversity and biodiversity; and others. We will read, for example, a novel about a family exposed to environmental pollution, a collection of first-person essays about truly experiencing the natural world, a memoir about ecological restoration, a cultural studies article about jellyfish, and other works.

Genres: critical-theoretical material; film; fiction; creative nonfiction; poetry;

A few keywords: setting; the poetics of attention; energy; subjectivity; agency; biophilia; solastalgia; resistance; posthumanism; the other-than-human / more-than-human world; animals; our own animality; bodily energy; working with the hands; climate; water; ocean; oil and gas; toxic bodies; multispecies ethnography; we are stardust / we are golden/ we are billion-year old carbon; slow violence;

### **Required Texts:**

All of the texts are required texts (i.e., including films and videos, single poems and essays, etc.) but these are the required books I have ordered for the course:

Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*:

“1. Bodily Natures” [Introduction to the course and course materials]; “4. Material Memoirs: Science, Autobiography, and the Substantial Self” [Lorde, Steingraber, Antonetta]; and “5. Deviant Agents: The Science, Culture, and Politics of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity” [Multiple Chemical Sensitivity]

This book has been ordered by the bookstore for this course, and it is also available in the U of Calgary library.

Chen, MacLeod and Neimanis, ed., *Thinking with Water* – excerpts

Kathleen Dean Moore, *The Pine Island Paradox* -- earth; water; the process of attending to the natural world; an ecological ethics of care; being alive; the senses

Sue Goyette, *Ocean* – water; ocean; how do we ‘know’ the natural world, and how do we relate to it; etc.

Richard Wagamese, *One Story, One Song* – earth; emotional and spiritual healing through nature; indigeneity; sense of belonging; family; what can stories do?

Fred Stenson, *Who by Fire* – earth; air; conflict between industry and agriculture, corporations vs. individual families; bodies and toxic substances; resistance and agency; long-term effects.

Freeman House, *Totem Salmon: Life Lessons from Another Species* – hands-on and feet-and-legs-in-the-water activism; fish; community; food; bioregionalism; resilience

A good grammar, punctuation and style handbook such as (but not restricted to) *The MLA Handbook*.

### **Assignments:**

An essay proposal for **ONE** of the two essays

(250 - 500 words) Due: no later than two weeks prior to essay submission date	10%
Narrative scholarship essay (8 – 12 pp. including works cited) Due: either Oct. 27 <sup>th</sup> OR December 8 <sup>th</sup> *	25%
Analytical research essay (10 to 12 pp. including works cited) Due: either Oct. 27 <sup>th</sup> OR December 8 <sup>th</sup> *	25%
* <b>NOTE:</b> Students have their choice as to which essay they do first. However, one of the two essays must be submitted on Oct. 27 <sup>th</sup> .	
Oral analytical, research presentation on one of the primary course texts (in class time, 30 minutes) (Moore, Wagamese, Stenson, Goyette, House, Alaimo, Chen/MacLeod, Neimanis)	20%
Class participation Due: each class	10%
Informal, in-class oral reflections on your own narrative scholarship project in relation to the course as a whole (10 minutes; to be scheduled for the final two or three weeks of classes)	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

**There is no Registrar-scheduled exam in this course. Students must complete and submit in timely fashion ALL of the course assignments listed above in order to be eligible for a passing grade for the course.**

Your mark will be based entirely on your course work: there will be no final examination in this course. Note: That does not mean that you are not responsible for remembering and progressively building on what we are studying throughout the course. Quite the contrary. A course is an ongoing, continuous, accretive conversation and a process of community building.

The structural metaphor for the course will be that of the working group or the roundtable. (An even better metaphor might be that of the hive.) We will enhance our existing skillset by honing our ethic of and practice in the skills of collaboration and collective enterprise. The work world is essentially one of collaborating with others.

Essay proposal (10%). Likewise, a proposal is both a useful and a marketable skill. Many organizations depend in part on grants, and grants are awarded on the basis of a good proposal. Moreover, in order to give a presentation at a professional conference, one typically submits a proposal in advance that is then ‘vetted’ or ‘refereed’ by one’s

professional peers to determine whether or not it is worthwhile. Proposals are fun to write and a great way to a) find out what you really do think, b) draw yourself into the writing of the actual paper as they usually cause you inadvertently and effortlessly to write paragraph one and/or two of your essay. Models, strategies and examples will be provided in class.

Analytic research essay (10 to 12 pp. including works cited) (25%). NOTE: A research essay that contains no research is not one, and will receive a grade no higher than 50% no matter what other qualities it possesses. Although it is difficult to specify a precise number of highly pertinent scholarly articles that must be included and taken into account in the essay, four would be a good minimum, and they must be full scholarly articles (though you can certainly also incorporate other materials as well such as quotations from book reviews, print or audio interviews and so forth). Scholarly research must, moreover, be utilized to extend one's own thinking, not just typed in to demonstrate that one did do some research: the point of doing research is to interact with the ideas of others, not just cite "authorities." In your papers, you too are an authority.

Page lengths for written assignments are calculated on the following basis: All written assignments must be double-spaced in 12-point font with 1" margins on all four sides of the page.

Late penalties will be deducted for late assignments. Late penalties can and sometimes do result in a failing grade on an assignment so students will want to start assignments well in advance of any due date. **The late penalty for written work is one mark per day late.** That is, if an assignment merits a 20/25 (80%, A-) but comes in two days late, the mark will drop two marks to 18/25 (76%, B). This measure is in place in order to ensure a level playing field for everyone in the course and to facilitate timely completion and spacing of one's assignments.

Narrative scholarship essay (25%). Narrative scholarship is a hybrid of, as the name suggests, scholarly research and personal essay. Often written in the first person ("I"), the narrative scholarship essay nevertheless is rooted in and incorporates scholarly research. Narrative scholarship allows the writer the option of bringing one's own personal experiences and reflections together on the page with rigorous, academic thought. Please consult a few of these one-page mini-essays on narrative scholarship so that you have this hybrid genre clear in your mind:

[http://www.asle.org/wpcontent/uploads/ASLE\\_Primer\\_NarrativeScholarship.pdf](http://www.asle.org/wpcontent/uploads/ASLE_Primer_NarrativeScholarship.pdf)

We will talk more about narrative scholarship in class, and one could say that some of the texts we are studying for the course are themselves narrative scholarship – e.g. see how Kathleen Dean Moore blends the personal and the philosophical, for instance.

Oral Presentation (20%). Students are required to meet with the instructor no less than (preferably more than) one week in advance of their scheduled presentation. The purpose of our meeting is so that I can offer you guidance with respect to any and all aspects of your presentation and attempt to ensure the quality of presentations is high. Please come to our meeting having read the text thoroughly and with clear ideas and notes as to what you might do and how you might structure your presentation. As you will discover, there is nothing quite as effective as having to present your insights about a text to others to sharpen one's

focus and multiply one's insights. Oral presentations will likely take place in our classroom, but I am open to experimentation with the form and even the venue. Presentations might, for instance, include an easily accessible field trip, a guest expert, a short documentary made by you. You dream it, and let's discuss and frame it together.

This course will be conducted as a mixture of lecture, class and group discussion, group work, and other forms of learning. Respectful participation in all class-time activities, not just lectures, is compulsory. An important part of intellectual work is being able to speak about it with others. There is no point in hoarding your insights, keeping them solely to yourself: the world needs them, as we shall see as we read and think about the course materials. In short, students will be expected to assume the role of active participants in the co-construction and dissemination of knowledge rather than that of merely passive consumers of it. This includes participation in discussion and in credit-free assignments and activities carried out during class time.

A strong commitment to class attendance, completing the assigned readings in advance of the class for which they are scheduled, avidly participating in all class and group discussions and in-class exercises and activities, demonstrating respectful, accountable and open intellectual engagement with the course materials and with fellow students and the professor are highly valued components of class participation. Think of a course as a community of living, thinking, responding, researching, knowledge-creating beings. Intermittent attendance (more than a couple of absences per term) *always* results in losing one's place in terms of the material and the others in the course. Moreover, spotty attendance blended with showy participation on rare occasions does not net one a high grade for participation. We have a lot of fascinating material to talk about, work on and play with in this course!

Biennial Conference. Under Western Skies 2016: Water. This large, amazing conference is held only every two years, and since conference attendance and participation is a part of what most working people do, and since it takes place here in Calgary, please give serious consideration to attending the presentation by one of the authors on our course, Kathleen Dean Moore, on the morning of September 30th. I will be there too. I have negotiated with the organizers to offer you a very inexpensive deal (\$10) to register for that session only. Please register as soon as possible to reserve your seats in that session.

**NOTE** from the conference webmaster: "I have created a special link for the students of Dr. Banting. It is important that students use this specific link to take them to their special tickets. Please use the following link. When students land on the UWS Eventbrite page, they will need to click register and they will be taken directly to their \$10.00 tickets:

<http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/under-western-skies-conference-2016-registration-21567658447?discount=Banting>

However, I would highly encourage you to register for and attend as much of the conference as you possibly can. Such events can be not merely useful or advisable: they can be life-altering. See the conference website for single day rates, other single event rates, full registration, and details about who will be participating: <http://skies.mtroyal.ca>

By way of closure for the course and in order to deepen and extend what we have learned and

experienced during the term, your final assignment will be to provide 10 minutes of informal in-class oral reflections on your own narrative scholarship project in relation to the course and course materials as a whole. You may, if you want, read a prepared three-page paper or you may simply speak informally to us as a group as to your final thoughts and reflections. These reflections will be scheduled to take place over the final two or three weeks of classes (depending on course enrollment).

Recent research studies have shown that handwritten class notes are markedly superior in terms of acquiring a more thorough understanding of course material and for retention of material in one's memory. The instructor reserves the right to outlaw the use of phones, tablets, computers or other distractions in class. Surfing the web, checking email or social media, or taking calls or texting during class is strictly forbidden!!

Along similar lines, I highly recommend that you annotate and underline the primary course texts (preferably in paper, but you can annotate in ebook and electronic articles in formats such as the Kindle application). Don't try to preserve pristine copies of your books for resale to other students who will underline and annotate and therefore may do better than you did in the course! Underlining and annotating in the margins are the best ways of acquiring and consolidating your knowledge of textual material. 'Make tracks' in your text (though not, of course, in any library books ever).

Please do not attempt to read the assigned materials on your phone! You cannot possibly ingest the texts on a screen as small as that of a phone. We are not studying course materials for an entire term simply in order to extract "the main idea" or "the general drift" of a text! We will be focussing on what is actually on the page. **For the same reason, you must bring the assigned readings of the week to class. If you don't bring the text of the day to class, you are completely missing the point of literary studies.**

There will be no extra credit assignments or opportunities to re-do and resubmit your work. That being said, if you need some help or advice with anything course-related, please visit me in my office during my office hours, and I will be very pleased to assist you.

Double-sided printing of assignments is highly encouraged in order to save paper and trees. Please feel free to use factory-recycled paper or even paper that has already been used on one side only. This is not only permissible but admirable. Just draw a line diagonally through the material printed or written on the "wrong" side and make sure your pages are stapled in order.

Please **DO NOT** use any plastic cover sheets for your assignments. They have an annoying tendency to flap shut while one is trying to read them, and using plastic contributes to waste, pollution and excess carbon. Just a simple staple in the upper left-hand corner of the page is perfect. Please staple or clamp your work before handing it in. I do not normally carry a stapler with me to and from class.

Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on their respective due dates, and they must be physically handed to the instructor. At this point, I cannot accept any electronic submissions (which is too bad as it would save paper and trees). If you absolutely cannot hand me your work in class, then do not shove your professional work under my (or anyone

else's) office door. It can and does get trampled, lost, put under the wrong professor's door, etc. Instead hand them in via the English Dept. office between 8:30 and 4:30 (the office is closed from 12:00 to 1:00) or the Essay Drop Box just outside the English Department office. Assignments are date-stamped by the office staff at about 4:00 so if you have a strict deadline you should submit your work before 4:00.

NOTE: The English Office is on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of the Social Sciences Bldg.

In this course, final grades will be marked on the University of Calgary's four-point Undergraduate Grading System, as described in the Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

All individual assignments will receive a numerical grade and can be converted using the following scale:

90 + %	A+	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	4.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7
67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	2.0
60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the 4-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

**Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and

make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

**Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:**

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events <http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>. Our email address is [smecuofc@gmail.com](mailto:smecuofc@gmail.com).

**English Department Website:**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

**Writing support:**

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

**Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:**

<http://www.enough.utoronto.ca/computeruse/eetiquette.htm>

**Library and Research Support:**

Christie Hurrell, Interim Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact:

[christie.hurrell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:christie.hurrell@ucalgary.ca).

Find The English Pages research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

**Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:**



**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

**Grade appeals:**

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

**Deferral of term work and final examinations:**

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

**Student Accommodations:**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf).

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:**

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:**

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

**“Safewalk” Program:**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students’ Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

**Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:**  
[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca),  
[arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office:**  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

**Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):**

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses ([www.ucalgary.ca/usri](http://www.ucalgary.ca/usri)). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

## DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>)

“The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, . . . , to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community”. The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a “positive and productive learning and working environment.” This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that “seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff”. Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.