GSWS 318-4: E100: ST: FEMINISMS ENGAGING NONHUMANS (REMOTE)

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SYNCHRONOUS and/or ASYNCHRONOUS CLASS SCHEDULING
The course will incorporate weekly asynchronous lectures, which can be viewed at any time; occasional synchronous sessions may be scheduled if necessary.

Weekly small group discussions are synchronous, but will be held at mutually-agreed upon times at members’ discretion. Groups will be formed with as much attention to time zone and member preference as possible.

Please note that this course requires your access to:
- the internet, a connection to which is capable of streaming video (i.e., has adequate bandwidth)
- a computer-device from which you can create and post media including text, images, and video
- a service through which you can connect for group discussion
- a microphone and possibly headphones in order to participate in discussion

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Feminists are increasingly examining how the power structures that produce unjust oppressions for women and other marginalized Others extend to the nonhuman world. This course explores how feminists have theorized, advocated for, and fostered relations with nonhumans such as animals, plants, organic and inorganic matter, and machines.

Informed by feminist ethics, science studies, and philosophy, we ask: How do understandings of animals relate to conceptualizations of sex, gender, and sexuality; race, colonialism and slavery; and class and labour? Are there feminist obligations to animals, plants, bacteria, viruses, fungi, and protists? How does feminism inform and support animal and environmental advocacy? Can nonhumans teach us about ethics, care, and equality? What does it mean to be feminist on a climate-changing planet?

This course accommodates students with or without prior scientific or ecological knowledge about such topics as evolutionary biology; environmentalism and the anthropocene; cyborgs and artificial intelligence; animal research and ethics; bacteria, viruses and prions; stratigraphy and geology; homo-, trans-, and inter-sexuality in animals; and paleontology and paleoanthropology.

This course recognizes the timely and controversial nature of these topics, particularly regarding the ongoing covid-19 pandemic, as well as the role of GSWS in transforming students into critical advocates for change. As such, assignments encourage engagement in public dialogues on human/nonhuman relationships.

PREREQUISITE: 30 units, including three units in GSWS.
EDUCATIONAL GOALS:
For more detailed information please see the GSWS website:
http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/undergraduate/courses/Educational_Goals.html

COURSE READINGS:
• Selected readings posted to Canvas
• CHOOSE ONE of the following, procured by your own means (e.g., order or read online, etc.):

COURSE EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS:
• 30% ‘Grow/Observe’ Multimedia Field Journal: Grow something throughout the term OR do weekly observations of a SAFE field site and curate a multimedia (i.e., text, pictures, video, etc.) journal incorporating analysis based on the week’s readings, lectures, and group discussions. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, blogging, or any other chosen mode can be used to curate your journal which can be public or private. All things you grow must be pre-approved to foreground safety and ethics, but ideas include plants, sourdough starter, safely-contained mold, etc. Weekly field observations can be of green space, a certain tree or plant, a pet, moss, a stream, rocks, weeds, mildew, animal webcam, etc.
• 30% Group Dialogue Reflections: Weekly reflective accounts of your group’s synchronous discussions – what did you talk about and what did you learn or reflect upon?
• 35% Book Review Major Project: Select one book from the reading list below and use it as the basis to create a project with one of the following formats: infographic, long-form comic, podcast, short video, or other project approved by instructor. This project is individual but can be done in groups if approved by your instructor. You should choose your project based on technology and resources you have access to while learning from home
• 5% Who am I?: Complete your profile on Canvas