The Department of Women's Studies

WS 313-4 Women and the Environment: Eco-Feminist Critiques of Climate Change
WS 825-5 Graduate Seminar in Women Technology and Social Change

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The ways in which we perceive the natural world (and ourselves in it) provide a framework for our understandings of social relationship. Women, when differentiated from men by their ability to be the environment (i.e., to bear an embryo/fetus), have often been coessentialized with nature. In a society centered on modern (or Western) science and technology, women/nature and the virtues of womanhood/wild(er)ness often are viewed at best as inappropriate and at worst as dangerous to the public good, and creativity is viewed as being in need of strong social controls.

Thus, what we mean by environmentalist, development, equity, nature precautions and so on, and to whom we extend moral worth and/or community membership, will determine our concept of and actions towards sustainability.

We will identify strategies for environmentally-based social justice which have been pursued in different feminist worldviews. Of particular concern will be the place of eco-feminism within feminisms and environmentalism, particularly in academia in Canada and the ways in which ecofeminist analyses have affected, and been affected by, the interactions amongst these two social justice movements.

Required reading:

Evaluation:
Midterm 25%
Research essay (2500-3000 words) *** 20%
Environmental Code/journal (1000-1200 words) 10%
Analysis Paper (1000-1200 words) 10%
Attendance & participation 10%
Final Examination 25%

*** For WS 825-5, a 20–22 page research essay is required, and extended discussion time will be scheduled (to be decided).

Undergraduate Prerequisites:
Six credit hours including WS 101 or WS 102. Students who have taken this course as a Women's Studies Special Topics course may not take this course for further credit.

The Department of Women's Studies encourages clarity of thought and expression and good writing. Students will be evaluated on these skills in all courses given by the Department.