**Department of Communication, Popular Culture and Film**  
**Mass Media and the Natural Environment (COMM4P18): Syllabus and Grade Details**

**Instructor and course information:**  
Professor Jennifer Good  
Email: jgood@brocku.ca  
Office Hour: Thursday 12:30-1:30 and by appointment (we can meet in Second Life!)  
Second Life: Hap Dotterkelch  
Phone: 905-688-5550 x. 3707  
Course meets 2:00pm-5:00pm Monday (WH311)

**Course goals:**  
Introduce the concept of environmental communication;  
encourage critical thought on the relationship between various forms of communication and our understanding of/relationship with the natural environment;  
provide a forum in which aspects of environmental communication can be explored in a hands-on manner.

**Weekly readings and assignments:**  
There will be a number of readings, as well as “Show and Tell” assignments, each week. The expectation is that you will have read all of the readings, and have your “Show and Tell” ready, by Monday’s class and that you will come to class prepared to discuss the readings and present your “Show and Tell.” Additional readings (i.e. in addition to those on the syllabus) may be assigned throughout the semester.

**Grade composition – A quick look.** (A more detailed outline of the grades can be found in the “Grade composition – A detailed look”):

- Seminar attendance/participation: 25%
- Environmental communication blog (Due Mon. Dec. 2): 20%
- Environmental autobiography (Due Mon. Sept. 20): 5%
- Project: 15% (must submit proposal!)  
  - (Proposal due Mon. Oct. 4 in class; project due Mon. Oct. 18 in class)
- Final Paper/Project: 25% (must submit proposal!)  
  - (Proposal due Mon. Nov. 1 in class; Paper/project due Mon. Nov. 22 in class)
- Presentation: 10%  
  - (schedule TBA)  
- 100%
Late assignments:
- The penalty for a late assignment is a grade deduction of 5 percent per day. The project and the paper are due IN CLASS on the due date (at the latest) – a project/paper will be considered late (i.e. minus 5 percent) if it is not handed in at the start of class and considered two days late (i.e. minus 10 percent) if it is handed in after class (i.e. do not skip class to work on an assignment!).
- The weekend counts as one day.
- The assignment will not be accepted if it is more than two weeks late.
- If an assignment extension is granted, for an appropriate reason agreed to by the instructor, and the student does not submit the assignment on the extension due date, the same 5 percent per-day late penalty will apply.
- All work must be submitted (in time to receive a grade) in order to receive a final grade.

Course layout: Fall 2010

Course meets Mondays 2:00pm-5pm (WH311)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar</th>
<th>Readings and what to bring</th>
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| **Week 1:** Monday September 13, 2010  
Course introduction: What is “environmental communication”?

Next Show and Tell: Come with your Environmental Autobiography as well as an environmental “artifact” to help you tell your environmental autobiography for next class.  |
| No readings for today  |
| **Week 2:** Monday September 20, 2010  
What is our relationship with “the environment”?  

Next Show and Tell: Come to class with an artifact that illustrates how the BP oil spill was communicated.  |
| Show and Tell: Bring your environmental autobiography and an environmental “artifact” to help you tell your environmental autobiography.

Readings  
- Wise use: What do we believe?  (http://www.cdfearchives.org/wiseuse.htm)  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3: Monday September 27, 2010</th>
<th>Show and Tell: Bring an artifact that illustrates the communication of the BP oil spill</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is an oil spill communicated?</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
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</table>
| **Next Show and Tell:** Come to class with an example of the communication of climate change | - Garfield, B. (2010). From greenwashing to godwashing, BP and Obama fail at image control.  
- Lynn, M. (2010). BP Needs to Tell Whining Americans to Take a Hike  

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<tr>
<th>Week 4: Monday October 4, 2010</th>
<th>Show and Tell: Bring an artifact that illustrates the communication of climate change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is climate change communicated/framed?</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
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| Monday October 11, 2010: Thanksgiving! | |

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<th>Week 5: Monday October 18, 2010</th>
<th>Show and Tell: Bring an example of “nature tourism”/ecotourism</th>
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<tr>
<td>How is the story of eco-tourism told?</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Next Show and Tell:** Come to class with an example of greenmarketing/greenwashing | - DeLuca, K., & Slawter-Volkening, L. (2009). Memories of the tropics in industrial jungles: Constructing nature, contesting nature.  

| Project proposal due today | |
| Project due today |
| Week 6: Monday October 25, 2010 | **Show and Tell:** Bring an example of green marketing/greenwashing  

**Next Show and Tell:** Come to class with an example of consumerism/materialism and environmental communication. |
|---|---|
| **What is green marketing/greenwashing?** | **Readings**  
- Greenwashing: Perceived information manipulation in print advertisements.  
| --- | --- |
| **Week 7: Monday November 1, 2010** | **Show and Tell:** Bring an example of consumerism/materialism and environmental communication.  

**Next Show and Tell:** Come to class with an example of the communication of environmental advocacy. |
| **What about consumerism/materialism and environmental communication?** | **Readings**  
| **Final paper/project proposal due today** | --- |
| **Friday November 5, 2010** | --- |
| **Last date for withdrawal without academic penalty and last day to change from credit to audit status for duration 2 courses without academic penalty.** | --- |
| **Week 8: Monday November 8, 2010** | **Show and Tell:** Bring an example of the communication of environmental advocacy.  

**Next Show and Tell:** Come to class with an example of communication research you would like to undertake. |
| **What about the communication of environmental advocacy?** | **Readings**  
| Week 9: Monday November 15, 2010 | **Show and Tell:** Bring an example of environmental communication research you would like to undertake.  
**Next Show and Tell:** Come to class with an example of a 21st century environmental issue  
**Readings**  
- Cantril, J. (2010). Measurement and Meaning in Environmental Communication Studies: A Response to Kassing, Johnson, Kloeber, and Wentzel (read this after the Kassing et al. article).  
| --- | --- |
| Week 10: Monday November 22, 2010 | **Show and Tell:** Bring a 21st century example of environmental communication  
**Readings**  
| Week 11: Monday November 29, 2010 | Presentations |
| Week 12: Thursday December 2, 2010 (Make up day for Thanksgiving Monday) | Presentations |

**Final paper/project due in class!!!**
4P18 Grade Composition – A detailed look

Seminar attendance/participation/“Show and Tell” 25%

You will be expected to have readings completed prior to class, to bring whatever “show and tell” was due and to actively participate in class discussions, small group work, etc. Discussions and activities will be based on the specifics of readings and “home work”; if you have not done the readings/home work, it will be difficult for you to follow/participate in a meaningful way.

Environmental communication blog 20%

You know what a blog is. I’m sure all of you have come across a blog at some time or another; some of you may have a blog. What I would like you to do is create an environmental communication blog for the next twelve weeks (i.e. for the duration of this course). The only stipulation regarding the blog is that you use it as a place to engage the course material; how you engage the material is up to you. You can write prose and poems, you can post pictures and video clips that you find and/or create and, in general, you can do pretty much whatever you want.

What will I be looking for? Ongoing thoughtful, creative, engagement… That’s what I’ll be looking for. I want to see what came to mind as you read the readings, sat in class (this one… other ones…), had conversations, read the newspaper, watched tv, surfed the ‘net, walked around, reflected on your past, your future…

Project 20%
(Proposal due in class October 4, 2010; Project due in class October 18, 2010)

The intention for the project is for you to have a “hands-on” opportunity to explore some aspects of environmental communication. I do not have firm ideas of what the end results of these projects should look like, but I am sure that I will know the difference between something that has been thrown together at the last minute, and something that has been thoughtfully worked on.

I would like you to use the themes we are talking about in class as jumping off points for what you do, but what you jump into is up to you! Here are some ideas…

- Put together an “environmental communication” Web site or video
- Conduct a content analysis of “environmental communication”
- Conduct a comparative media analysis of “environmental communication”
- Apply a communication theory to an environmental campaign or organization
- Review and compare environmental organization homepages
- Perform a rhetorical analysis of an environmental message
- Become a part of an environmental on-line community and reflect on the potential for the community to create change
- Create an “environmental communication” campaign
- Write a well-informed letter to the editor (hand in the information and the letter…)
- Think of an environmental communication “artifact” for a 2010 time capsule and write up a rationale for its inclusion
- Write an environmental communication book review/movie review
- Another topic as suggested by you and given permission by me (alternative topics must be passed by me at least one full week before the deadline for the proposal for that topic)…
Some questions and (unsatisfying) answers about the project:
Q. What is a report/review? A. A report/review details what you have done and how what you have done pertains to what is going on in class.
Q. How long should it be? A. As long as it takes.
Q. What format will it take? A. What format would you like it to take?
Q. Why are you being so evasive about the details of these projects? A. Because you are in 4th year now and I’d like to see what you want to do. I want you to “wow” me!
Q. Can a pair or more of us wow you together? A. I would prefer that you do your own thing, but I am willing to have you make a case for some other arrangement.
Q. What should the proposal contain? A. The proposal should tell me all of the pertinent details for the project you are undertaking – what/who is the topic of your investigation? How are you going to undertake your investigation (i.e. what will the steps be?)? What are the resources you will be making use of? The more you can tell me, the better able I will be to give you feedback…

Final Paper/Project 25%  
(Proposal due in class November 1, 2010; Paper/Project due in class November 22, 2010)

This will be a formal academic research paper – 12-15 pages in length (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, Times New Roman, 11 pt. font) – on some aspect of environmental communication. I will expect to see a variety of sources (12-15 or so) from both journal (i.e. primary) and non-journal (i.e. secondary) sources (we will talk more about sources in class i.e. NO Wikepedia and no textbooks). The topic for the paper is up to you and could be something inspired by the project you do (but must draw entirely on new research…) or one of your Show and Tell assignments. I will be particularly impressed by papers that include some of your own research! (We’ll talk about this more in class…)

Some questions and (unsatisfying) answers about the paper:
Q. Can we do something other than a formal academic paper? A. Feel free to propose some other “product” for me to assess.
Q. What should the proposal contain? A. The proposal should tell me the thesis of your paper, the sources you will be using and why (i.e. annotate your sources) and the general outline of what your paper will look like. In general, the more you can tell me, the better able I will be to give you feedback…

Presentation 10%  
The presentation will be a 15 minute (or so) sharing of the work you have done in the class including your blog, project and the final paper.

Expectations
1. Diligence: I expect you to have each week’s readings done for Monday’s class. I also expect that you will have engaged the readings such that you will arrive in class ready to explore, debate and participate.
2. Respect: I expect that you will be quiet and attentive when others are speaking and that you will have respect for ideas and opinions that may differ from your ideas and opinions.
3. Honesty: I expect you to abide by the code of academic conduct as set forth by Brock University. All work you submit must be your own and all references to the work of others must be properly cited (please see the attached Statement on Academic Misconduct and Pledge of Academic Integrity). If you have any questions about this, please ask me.

Rule: No laptops or other digital communication devices… Alas…