

History 3355: Nature, Culture, and the Canadian Environment

Summer Session 2012

Time: Monday and Wednesday, 1:00 - 3:50 p.m.

Lecture Room: Tilley Hall, Room #104

Lab Room: Harriet Irving Library, Learning Lab Room #112

Instructor: Mark McLaughlin

Office: Tilley Hall, Room #108

Telephone: (506) 453-4621 (History Department's main office, messages only)

E-mail: mark.mclaughlin@unb.ca

Office Hours: Monday and Tuesday, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or by appointment

Note: The room where I have my office hours is a shared space, so I do not work there outside of my official hours. If you cannot meet me during official office hours, contact me (preferably through e-mail) and we can arrange a separate time to meet.

Course Description:

This course examines the relationship between humans and their environment in the geographical space now referred to as "Canada" from the end of the last Glacial Period to the late 20th century. Over the next several weeks, we will be following a rough chronology and covering topics such as ecological imperialism, forest and wildlife management, agriculture, use of water, the creation of national parks, progressive conservation and modern environmental movements, energy regimes, and climate change. In other words, we will be using Environmental History (EH) to reframe the traditional Canadian historical narrative.

Besides examining EH topics, we will also discuss how to "do" EH. This will be accomplished through use of the text, *Method and Meaning in Canadian Environmental History*, and the Enquiry-Based Learning (EBL) sessions (see description below). Students will also have the opportunity to disseminate EH knowledge through Digital Environmental Histories (once again, see description below). Digital technologies are becoming increasingly popular with historians for the purposes of knowledge production and dissemination.

Required Text:

Alan MacEachern and W.J. Turkel, eds. *Method and Meaning in Canadian Environmental History*. Toronto, ON: Nelson, 2008.

Course Evaluation:

Students are responsible for understanding the material presented in the textbook, in the EBL sessions, and in the lectures. All assignments must be submitted to receive a passing grade. The assignments and their values are as follows:

Class Participation:	25%
Two EBL Session Response Papers (due first Monday after EBL session):	20%
Digital Environmental Histories Project (group project and individual essay, due Aug. 11):	30%
Final Exam (TBA):	25%

Late Assignments:

An assignment must be handed in at the beginning of the class on the date that the assignment is due, or put in the History Department’s “essay drop off box” in Tilley Hall, Room #107 (the History Common Room) by the end of the day that it is due. Assignments will be gathered from the box at the end of the day (4:30 p.m.), date-stamped, and put in my departmental mailbox. Please do not hand in assignments directly to departmental staff or slide them under my office door (once again, a shared space).

Assignments handed in after the due date, without prior arrangement, will be considered late. Late assignments will be penalized 5% per overdue day on the final grade of the assignment. Extensions to help students organize their work may be given without penalty if requested at least a week in advance. Extensions within a week of the due date will require presentation of a physician’s note/medical certificate.

Absenteeism:

Absenteeism is strongly discouraged, as you cannot achieve a good class participation mark without being present. Please be advised that you are responsible for keeping abreast of all lectures, discussions, and disseminated information, including course changes and special announcements made in class. I may take steps to accommodate absence from class upon presentation of a physician's note/medical certificate.

Academic Fraud:

The following is a general statement required by the University in all course outlines:

"The University of New Brunswick places a high value on academic integrity and has a policy on plagiarism, cheating and other academic offences.

Plagiarism includes:

1. quoting verbatim or almost verbatim from any source, including all electronic sources, without acknowledgement;
2. adopting someone else's line of thought, argument, arrangement, or supporting evidence without acknowledgement;
3. submitting someone else's work, in whatever form without acknowledgement;
4. knowingly representing as one's own work any idea of another.

Examples of other academic offences include: cheating on exams, tests, assignments or reports; impersonating somebody at a test or exam; obtaining an exam, test or other course materials through theft, collusion, purchase or other improper manner, submitting course work that is identical or substantially similar to work that has been submitted for another course; and more as set out in the academic regulations found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Penalties for plagiarism and other academic offences range from a minimum of F (zero) in the assignment, exam or test to a maximum of suspension or expulsion from the University, plus a notation of the academic offence on the student's transcript.

For more information, please see the Undergraduate Calendar, Section B, Regulation VII.A, or visit <http://nocheating.unb.ca>. It is the student's responsibility to know the regulations."

Special Needs:

I am very willing to accommodate students with special needs. Students with a condition which may influence their ability to complete the course requirements in a timely manner must meet with me before July 11 to discuss adjusting the requirements accordingly. Special consideration will require presentation of a doctor's note/medical certificate. I also encourage students whose special needs are already recognized by the university to speak to me if they foresee challenges to completing assignments on time.

Class Cancellations:

Class cancellations will be announced via the class email list and a notice will be put on the lecture room door. Any changes made to the syllabus to accommodate the missed class will be announced on the first day back after the cancellation.

Course Schedule:

Note: Each class session is almost three hours long (170 minutes), and these will be divided into two 80-minute halves with a ten-minute break in between. Except for the first day, the first half of each session will be a lecture, while the second half will alternate between lab time and EBL sessions. Contextual readings for the lectures and EBL session readings will be made available on Blackboard or through the Harriet Irving Library's "Reserve Desk" at least one week in advance of a particular class session.

Wednesday, July 4

First half - Discussion of syllabus and course, explanation of EBL sessions and Digital Environmental Histories project, introduction to EH

Second half - Lecture: End of the Last Glacial Period

Monday, July 9

First half - Lecture: The First Nations

Second half - Lab time: Proceed to HIL, Learning Lab Room #112, introduction to lab, begin digital project work

Wednesday, July 11

First half - Lecture: Arrival of the First Europeans

Second half - EBL session: Ecological Imperialism

Monday, July 16

First half - Lecture: The Commodification of Nature in Early Colonial Canada

Second half - Lab time

Wednesday, July 18

First half - Lecture: Uses and Cultures of Waterways (guest lecturer - Jason Hall)

Second half - EBL session: Early Examples of Ecological Awareness

Monday, July 23

First half - Lecture: Agricultural Revolutions (guest lecturer - David Bent)

Second half - Lab time

Wednesday, July 25

First half - Lecture: Nature, Development, and Nationalism

Second half - EBL session: Changing Notions of Landscape

Monday, July 30

First half - Lecture: The Progressive Conservation Movement

Second half - Lab time

Wednesday, August 1

First half - Lecture: Modern Environmentalism

Second half - EBL session: Energy Regimes

Monday, August 6

New Brunswick Day, no class

Wednesday, August 8

First half - Lecture: "New" Environmental Problems

Second half - Viewing of Digital Environmental Histories and class wrap-up

Enquiry-Based Learning Sessions and Response Papers:

Enquiry-based learning is a form of learning that stresses student initiative, creativity, and effort, and rewards it accordingly. Four EBL sessions will be held over the course of the term. These will require you to analyze various primary and secondary sources related to Canadian EH. EBL session descriptions will be made available on Blackboard, while the readings will be available through Blackboard (if possible) and at the Harriet Irving Library's "Reserve Desk" at least one week in advance of a particular session. The session themes are:

- 1. Ecological Imperialism**
- 2. Early Examples of Ecological Awareness**
- 3. Changing Notions of Landscape**
- 4. Energy Regimes**

Each eighty-minute EBL session will be broken into two halves. Students will work in groups during the first half of the session, with one person acting as the group's recorder (a different person must do this each week). During the second half of the session, we will reassemble and groups will make small presentations about what they discussed. We will then have a larger class discussion about that week's EBL session theme.

As part of your overall grade, you will have to write response papers based on two of the four EBL sessions. These papers will be approximately 750 words (2-4 pages) in length, excluding notes and bibliography. Response papers will be due on the Monday following the EBL session. For example, if you write a response paper on Ecological Imperialism (July 11), then the paper would be due on July 16. The papers must follow the conventions of formal essay writing and adhere to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). We will discuss formal essay writing and how to use Chicago citation during the first class, and you can ask me about such matters

during my official office hours. Each EBL response paper will be worth 10% of your final mark, for a total of 20%.

It should also be noted that material covered during the EBL sessions may be featured in the final exam.

Digital Environmental Histories Project:

In recent years, historians have started to use digital technologies to enhance how they create and disseminate historical knowledge. Through their use of online blogs, Twitter, and the **Network in Canadian History & Environment** website (**NiCHE**, available at <http://niche-canada.org>), Canadian environmental historians (EHers) are at the forefront of this movement. I strongly encourage you to visit the **NiCHE** website to see the sorts of projects Canadian EHers are involved with. Particularly relevant for our purposes is the video blog **EHTV** (available at <http://niche-canada.org/ehTV>), which features online videos of EHers doing their work and research "in the field."

As part of this larger trend and as part of the exploration of how to "do" EH, students will form groups and create their own "Digital Environmental Histories." Not everyone has the same level of experience with technology, so an effort will be made to ensure that all of the groups have roughly the same level of combined technological experience. The digital histories created by the groups will be short films at least 60-90 seconds in length, and they will inform the audience about some aspect of Canadian EH. For example, if I created one based on my own research, it would be about the development of forestry in New Brunswick in the 20th century. Other examples of what these could look like would be the Canadian Heritage Minutes from the 1990s (search "Canadian Heritage Minutes" on YouTube to watch them). Students could film acted sequences, use narration, employ photographic evidence, incorporate primary research, or a whole host of other methods. Creativity is strongly encouraged!

Since this is a serious academic assignment, students must consult credible sources of information during the development of their film project. These could include academic articles and books, primary documents, reliable websites (not Wikipedia), etc. Think of this part of the project as the research phase of an essay assignment. In addition, acknowledgement of sources of information is incredibly important in the discipline of history. As a result, each digital history will have to include a list of credits at the end of the film which identifies all of the primary and secondary sources consulted, plus the names of all of those involved in the project.

Students are also encouraged to use Twitter to enhance their digital project experience. Your use or lack of use of Twitter will in no way affect your final mark. Rather, this should be viewed as simply another way to enjoy the experience and engage with your fellow students and potentially with EHers across the country. As a digital tool, Twitter is extremely easy to use, plus there are great how-to videos on YouTube for those who need a little extra help setting up an account (a good one is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0xbjIE8cPM>). If you already have a Twitter account, great. We will have our own discussion thread/hashtag, #hist3355, which students can use to discuss problems or share their progress. To reach the wider EH community,

use #envhist, but this should be used only when you want your tweet to be sent out to a larger group, not just the class. I have been a member of the "Twitterverse" since early spring 2012, and I have learned a lot in that short period of time - follow me, @MarkJMcLaughlin.

Along with the film project, each individual student in the group will have to write a 1,500-word reflective essay (5-6 pages), excluding notes and bibliography. The essay will provide a summary of the film topic and discuss how the group came up with the topic, the process by which the group conducted its research (such as the sources consulted), and the group's reasons for choosing to present certain pieces of information in the film and not others. Simply put, this essay will in large part be a discussion of why the group "did" the digital project the way that it did. As with the EBL response papers, the essay must follow the conventions of formal essay writing and adhere to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

A few more points: There will be in-class lab time during the second half of Monday classes to work on the digital projects, which will take place in the Harriet Irving Library's Learning Lab Room #112. Please use the time during these labs wisely. Also, both the film project and the reflective essay are due on the final day of classes (August 8). We will take time during the second half of the final class to view all of the groups' digital films. Furthermore, with your permission, I will upload the films to a common YouTube channel to make them accessible to the wider public. I have also been in contact with NiCHE, and I will be writing my own reflective piece about the projects for the network's blog, The Otter. As part of that piece, I will include a link to the YouTube channel with your projects, so the larger EH community will learn about and view the groups' Digital Environmental Histories.

The group project and the reflective essay will each be worth 15% of your final mark, for a combined total of 30%.