

**Laurentian University  
School of the Environment**

**ENVI 2556 EL: Environmental Education**

**Class Time:** M & W 5:30 pm -6:50 pm                      **Classroom:** C-207  
**Instructor:** Dr. Yovita Gwekwerere                      **Office:** SE-303M  
**Office Hrs:** Thurs: 2:00-4:00 pm (or by appointment)  
**Email:** [ygwekwerere@laurentian.ca](mailto:ygwekwerere@laurentian.ca)

**Course Description:**

This course engages students in the study of how to teach about the environment. The course considers environmental education frameworks from the historical, global and local contexts and presents methods of teaching about the environment both in the formal and non-formal education settings. The course will include mandatory readings, online discussions, group projects, experiential activities, written assignments, as well as an oral presentation. PREREQ: None. (Lec, sem, exp,) cr 3.

**Course Readings**

Students are expected to have completed the readings before each class session so that they can participate in discussions based on the readings and current issues that relate to the readings.

**Course Objectives:**

In this course, students will:

- a) be introduced to pedagogies, resources, experiences and activities for teaching Environmental Education in formal and non-formal education settings.
- b) explore the historical and existing contexts of Environmental Education, critically reflect on key local, national and global environmental issues and the role of Environmental Education in steering a course towards sustainable livelihoods.
- c) design programs and plan activities for teaching environmental education both in formal and non-formal educational settings.

**Course Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students should be able to demonstrate:

- familiarity with the Ontario Environmental Education Policy
- environmental pedagogical content knowledge
- competence in program planning, activity planning, engaging students in experiential activities, and finding relevant teaching resources
- the ability to integrate policies such as the Inclusive Education and Aboriginal Perspectives in planning Environmental Education programs
- critical thinking and problem solving skills

**Required Texts:**

1. Palmer, J. A. (2003) *Environmental education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Theory, practice, progress and promise* (e-book). New York: Rutledge.

**Course Material available on D2L:**

Assignments, lecture notes in PowerPoint, and course announcements will be available through D2L. There will be a significant amount of material from each lecture and group discussions, including most of the examples, which will not be posted on D2L. The purpose of posting partial lecture notes on D2L is to help students concentrate during lectures and take effective notes. All material covered in class including material not posted on D2L is potential examination material. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to attend all lectures.

**Note for students with disabilities:**

Laurentian University is committed to undertake reasonable efforts to provide an academic environment which is fully accessible to persons with disabilities and where access is consistent with an individual's right to dignity and self-esteem. The Accessibility Services Office, located in J.N. Desmaris library (L-210) collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations please register with the Accessibility Services Office at the beginning of each academic term. **Once registered with the Accessibility Services Office, please meet the instructor, in confidence, to discuss your needs.**

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

All assignments submitted for evaluation in ENVI 2556 EL will be the student's own original work. Laurentian University has clear, well-defined policies concerning academic dishonesty. Specific details concerning these policies can be accessed at the following link:

[http://www.laurentian.ca/vpacademic/POLICIESandPROCEDURES\\_index.htm](http://www.laurentian.ca/vpacademic/POLICIESandPROCEDURES_index.htm)

**Course Evaluation**

<b>Experiential reflections (4)</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Midterm Project (Eco-mentoring)</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Action Project</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>30%</b>

**Assignments****Experiential Reflections**

For environmental education to be meaningful there is need to engage learners/participants in hands-on experiential activities and action-related projects. In order for these experiences to enhance the development of pro-environmental behaviours learners/participant need to engage in reflecting about their new understandings, emotions and personal connections they can make as a result of the new knowledge they learned. As part of this course, you will participate in several experiential, and action related activities. You will write four reflections based on some of the experiential activities indicated in the syllabus.

**Please look at the detailed guidelines for this assignment on D2L.**

### **Mid-term Project: Eco-mentoring**

Working with a partner, choose an environmental action/activity (based on the in – class workshop presentations focused on the topics, nearby nature, Inspiring hope and removing barriers. Design a lesson plan or action plan for teaching/mentoring a group of students (either in a school or to fellow university students). Go to a school or bring together a group of university students and teach them about the issue and what action they can take to address the adverse effects to the environment. You are required to submit a detailed lesson plan/description of the activity, suitably themed mentoring resources and a reflection of how the mentoring process went, what went well and how the lesson or mentoring could be improved.

**Please look at the detailed guidelines for this project on D2L.**

### **Action Project**

Service learning is a teaching strategy in environmental education that helps connect students to issues in their local communities and help them to become active participants. Working with a partner or in a team of 3 - 6 people, choose one important environmental issue in your local community and design an action project focused on resolving that issue. If you find that your action would work better with a larger group you can invite other students to join. A number of suggested actions are listed on the document on D2L. However, feel free to choose an action based on an issue that you feel is close to your heart, even if it's not on the list. The local newspaper or environmental group websites can provide ideas of some issues in our community that need to be acted on. You can also partner with a local environmental group that is taking action to resolve the environmental issue. You can also partner with the municipality or local businesses or university on projects that are already in progress. If you decide to work on a project that is in progress, make sure you contribute your own ideas for how to improve the actions already in place. Once you have your action project figured out, your task is to:

- a) Conduct research on the issue and write a page describing the issue and how it impacts the environment.
- b) Design an action project to help resolve the issue
- c) Conduct the action project (see assignment description for guidance on how to conduct the action project).
- d) Submit a portfolio which includes:
  - project introduction and description,
  - Journaling of the action project,

- reflections on the action project,
  - Outline of solutions for addressing the issue and a letter to the mayor or community letting them know about the issue and the actions you have taken. Also tell the mayor why such actions need to continue and how the city can help,
  - Pictures showing your team involvement in the action project.
- e) Present your project in class (Audio and visual presentations welcome).

**Please look at the detailed guidelines about this project on D2L.**

### Final Exam:

The final exam for this course will cover material from the entire term and will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Students **MUST NOT** make travel plans until the final exam schedule is posted as ALL exams will be written on the day assigned by the Registrar's Office. If you require special permission to re-schedule the exam date please contact the Registrar's office ahead of time as I will not be in a position to change the exam date. Please note that documentation such as a doctor's note will be required.

### Marking:

Should a student have a concern about a grade on an assignment, I will be pleased to discuss it privately in my office AND at least 24 hours after handing back the work in question. This is to provide you with an opportunity to go through your assignment read the comments and then we can have a more fruitful discussion when you come to see me.

### Weekly Class Schedule

Week	Readings	Theme
1	<i>The roots of environmental education (Deeper)</i>	<b>Introduction</b> <b>What is Environmental Education?</b> <b>History and development of Environmental Education</b> <i>Experiential activity: Nature appreciation &amp; reflection</i>
2	<i>The Global Agenda (by J. Palmer)</i>	<b>The Global Agenda – understanding local, national and global environmental issues.</b> <i>Experiential Activity: Case study/video</i>
3	1. <i>Integrated Model for structuring Environmental education</i> 2. <i>The Ontario Environmental Education Policy;</i>	<b>Environmental Education – Models, structure practice and Teaching methods</b> <i>Activity: (Field trip to the Lake Laurentian Conservation Area &amp; Reflection)</i>
4	<i>Eco-mentors program handbook</i>	<b>Eco-mentoring</b> <i>Field activities: Invited guests</i>
		<i>Experiential Reflection due</i>
5	<i>Understanding</i>	<b>Education for a sustainable future</b>

	<i>Sustainability (Going to green)</i>	<i>Activity: Case study/video</i>
6		Fall Reading week
		<i>Mid-term Paper (Eco-mentoring assignment Due)</i>
7	<i>Through adventure education</i>	<b>Environmental Literacy in non-formal settings – Human identity and citizen awareness</b> <i>Field Activity: Visit Science North</i>
8	<i>Service learning (Going to Green)</i>	<b>Designing Environmental action projects</b> <i>Activity: Solar energy, wind energy, green buildings, water conservation technologies</i>
9	<i>Ontario First Nations, Metis and Inuit Education Policy</i>	<b>Integrating First Nations Metis and Inuit perspectives in Environmental Education - teachings from the Elders.</b> <i>Activity: (Invited guest/video)</i>
10	<i>Classroom to community connections.</i>	<b>Participatory pedagogy in Environmental Education</b> Youth participation in school and community  <i>Activity (Debate)</i>
11		<b>Technology and Sustainability</b> - Resources for teaching environmental Education. <i>Activity: -Case study/video</i>
12		<b>Environmental Education in the 21st Century</b> - Teaching about radical rethinking and Ecological Justice <i>Activity: Case study/video &amp; write a reflection</i>
		<i>Action Project due and in-class presentations</i>
13		<i>Revision in class &amp; Final Experiential Reflection</i>
<i>Final Exam</i>		<i>Final exam</i>