

**FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES  
York University  
BES Program**

**ENVS 4810B Special Topics:  
Environmental Arts and Food Sovereignty**

**Course:** ES/ENVS 4800B Special Topics: Environmental Arts and Food Sovereignty

**Term:** Spring/Summer 2018 (April 25 in Toronto, May 11-20 in Costa Rica)

**Location:** York University Eco-Campus, Las Nubes, Costa Rica

**Calendar Description**

This workshop offers students the opportunity to experience environmental arts that are integral to struggles for food sovereignty in Costa Rica, and to witness both industrial and organic agriculture projects as well as work with key artists on community-engaged artistic productions: mobile murals proclaiming small farmers' rights against corporate agriculture and petroglyph art projects in a rural community. The course culminates with artistic participation in the annual Alexander Skutch Festival.

**Prerequisite**

There are no pre-requisites, though the course will build on the Environmental Politics, Justice and the Arts foundation course, as well as 2122, 3122, 3125, 3170, 3303, 4011, 4161, and 4420.

**Course Director**

Deborah Barndt, Professor Emerita

Course consultation hours: by appointment, before and after class sessions

**Course Management**

As an arts-based field course, ENVS 4810B will be run like a workshop, with community visits and participation in food and arts projects, guest artists and hands-on artistic production. Readings and discussion will frame and deepen the experiential learning with relevant concepts and contextual understanding.

**Time and Location**

April 25: Black Creek Community Farm, 4929 Jane Street

May 11-20: York University Eco-Campus, Las Nubes, Costa Rica

Field visits and production sites: Farmers' Market, San Isidro; Longo Mai community; Quizarra

## **Purpose and Objectives of the Course**

The course focuses on environmental arts as tools for educating around issues of food sovereignty, offering conceptual frameworks for exploring both environmental arts and food sovereignty. Students will become familiar with food production practices in the Biological Corridor and participate in two community-engaged projects for food sovereignty: the production of murals for use by small farmers protesting corporate control of industrial agriculture, and photo and video documentation of permacultural and artistic practices in a rural community. They will share these collective productions with the broader community in the annual Alexander Skutch Arts Festival in Quizarra, Costa Rica.

### *Specific learning outcomes*

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand the core concepts of environmental arts and food sovereignty (with examples of each in the context of the Americas);
- Be familiar with the struggles of food production in the Biological Corridor;
- Develop visual production skills through mural projects, petroglyph painting and photo/video documentation;
- Demonstrate ways to engage community members, in particular youth, in arts-based projects around food;
- Evaluate the impact of their contributions to a major community event.

## **Organization of the Course**

The course moves between hands-on experiences in communities and reflection on those experiences, with relevant concepts.

## **Evaluation**

The grade for the course\*\* will be based on the following items weighted as indicated:

The two major assignments follow a practice/reflection dynamic, with key community-engaged community arts productions worth 50% and the reflections on those experiences in a journal worth 50%.

I propose that you keep a Journal as the key site for reflecting on your experience in the course, both the official assignments as well as your emotional responses to the experiences in home stays, field visits, and group work. Feel free to be creative in how you explore and present your thoughts, using graphic approaches if this is comfortable for you (while computer print-outs are also acceptable). We will have limited access to

internet, though there are computers in a local library that you can use.

**Personal essay: 20% Due May 2 ~~April 25~~**

Three-page essay on your understanding of environmental arts and food sovereignty, connecting to concepts introduced in Roberts and Barndt books, and raising two critical questions the readings generated for you.

Email to [dbarndt@yorku.ca](mailto:dbarndt@yorku.ca) by May 2.

**Three journal entries below (60%) due May 25**

**Supermarket and farmer's market tours- 20%**

Comparative chart of supermarkets and farmers' markets in Canada and Costa Rica: (in Toronto: Evergreen, The Stop, Dufferin Grove, Sorauren and in San Isidro: Mega, Pali, Coope-Agri )

**Community arts project #1: 20% Art and garden projects in Longo Mai**

Reflect on the experience of permaculture and art projects in Longo Mai, linking to readings.

**Community arts project #2: 20% Mural production in San Isidro**

Reflect in journal on mural production in San Isidro, linking the experience to assigned readings

I will set up 15 minute consultations with each student during the first and second week to discuss your reflections on the two major experiences.

**Group documentation of projects: 20% Due May 20**

Class will be divided into three documentation groups to document and produce a slide show of the three major activities: 1) Mural production in San Isidro; 2) Artistic production in Longo Mai; and 3) the Alexander Skutch community festival. The first two will be shown at the community festival.

**Required Readings**

There are two core readings that frame the course:

Wayne Roberts. *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Food – New Edition*. Toronto: The New Internationalist/BTL, 2013.

Barndt, Deborah. Preface and Introduction. *VIVA! Community Arts and Popular Education in the Americas*. vii – xv, 1-18. (available as a pdf in Google doc).

All additional readings (noted below) will be accessible on a course Google Doc. These

should be downloaded and brought with you, since we'll have limited Internet access. It is also highly recommended that you read most of them before leaving for Costa Rica, since much of our time will be in hands-on activities, without much reading time.

*On environmental arts:*

Required reading:

Burns, Leah. "Seriously...Are You *Really* an Artist? Humour and Integrity in a Community Mural Project." Deborah Barndt (ed). *Playing with Fire: Art as Activism*. Toronto: Sumach Press, 2006.

Erika Doss. "Raising Community Consciousness with Public Art: The Guadalupe Mural Project." *Spirit Poles and Flying Pigs: Public Art and Cultural Democracy in American Communities*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995, 157-196.

Recommended reading:

Cohen-Cruz, Jan. "An Introduction to Community Art and Activism." From Community Arts Network website.

Penner, Aileen; Jacinda Mack; Lee Bensted. "Salmon Tales: Eco-Art Activism." In Deborah Barndt (ed). *Wild Fire: Art as Activism*. Toronto: Sumach Press, 2006, 133-145.

*On food sovereignty:*

Required reading:

Barndt, Deborah. "Re:Claiming Food Sovereignty, Reclaiming Ways of Knowing: Food Justice Course Digs Deeper" in J. Sumner. *Learning, Food, and Sustainability: Sites for Resistance and Change*. Palgrave/Macmillan,

Eric Holt-Gimenez. "Food, Security, Food Justice or Food Sovereignty?: Crises, Food Movements and Regime Change." In Alkon & J. Agyeman (Eds.). *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011, 309-330.

Via Campesina et al. Using Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition to Promote and Defend the People's Right to Adequate Food: A Manual for Social Movements and Civil Society Organizations. October 2013 -

[http://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/GSF-Manual\\_en.pdf](http://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/GSF-Manual_en.pdf)

Recommended reading:

Dawn Morrison. "Indigenous Food Sovereignty: A Model for Social Learning." In Hannah Wittman, Annette Aurélie Desmarais, Nettie Weibe (eds). *Food Sovereignty in Canada: Creating Just and Sustainable Food Systems*. Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2011, 97-113.

Winona LaDuke. "Food as Medicine: The Recovery of Traditional Foods to Heal the People." *Recovering the Sacred: The Power of Naming and Claiming*. Haymarket Books, 2015, 191-210.

Agrifoodatlas

2017\_facts-and-figures-about-the-corporations-that-control-what-we-eat

Music:

"Silent Spring" by Pat Humphries

Lila Downs on borders

Inch by Inch

### **Required background reading on two community projects**

Links to information for first week of mural painting in Farmers' Market:

<http://bloqueverde.blogspot.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/bloqueverdec/>

Links to information for program on second week in Longo Mai

<http://www.escueladelatierra.org/>

<http://www.permaculture.org/>

<http://www.sonador.info/es/>

2011 About the pineapple plantation (10:48 – English)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TCu7ysPt98>

Longo Mai history (11:23 – English)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFsw6fZzJFE>

2012 (9:12 – Spanish)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80FBZKdBKY4>

2013 About the Longo Mai Centre for Art and Sustainability (3:35 – Spanish)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-3mx1VHBHc>

2014 Video of young volunteers in Long Mai and Costa Rica (6:12 – music, German titles)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7JcimLLW\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7JcimLLW_E)

The following online videos are also resources to draw upon:

Videos on Food Justice and Food Sovereignty

Food Sovereignty: "La Via Campesina in Movement...Food Sovereignty Now!"

<https://vimeo.com/27473286>

Seven principles of food sovereignty:

<http://www.nfu.ca/sites/www.nfu.ca/files/Principles%20of%20Food%20Sovereignty.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fYGCHoP-HY>

Food Chains

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6vw-qTCW8fo>

Olivier de Schutter's report to the UN Assembly on the Right to Food.

[http://www.sfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20140310\\_finalreport\\_en.pdf](http://www.sfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20140310_finalreport_en.pdf)

Examples from struggles against GMO and land grabs

***Seeds of Death***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUd9rRSLY4A>

***Avoid GMO***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LAKFhDquuw>

**GROWING**

<https://vimeo.com/7966811>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxFTGq94dXs>

Examples of short videos and digital stories on community food initiatives:

FoodShed digital stories among videos at [www.sustainontario](http://www.sustainontario)

Photo voice gala video of ISANS and EAC:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=49&v=TDM5pYMZLjs>

EAC: "Our Food II: Making Connections

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Osl2TMyo3ok>

## **Schedule of Topics and Readings by week**

The following list of lecture topics and readings is subject to change. Remember that the readings listed under each date are assigned for reading during the following week and will be discussed at the tutorial following that date.

April 25, 10 – 4 PM First class at location TBA: orientation class, and introduction to key concepts

Videos: Earth to Table Legacies, documentation by 2017 course students

Roberts, Wayne. *The No-Nonsense Guide to World Food (New Edition)*. Toronto: Between The Lines, London: The New Internationalist. 2013.

Barndt, Deborah. Preface and Introduction. VIVA! Community Arts and Popular Education in the Americas. vii – xv, 1-18. (pdf)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture\\_in\\_Costa\\_Rica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture_in_Costa_Rica)

April 26-May 9: Visit a supermarket and a farmer's market in your neighbourhood. Use

the charts I sent, with the Supermarket tour manual as a reference. In supermarket, focus on beans, pineapple, coffee.

Thursday, May 10 – Students arrive at Las Nubes

**Friday, May 11** – Overview of course and of frameworks for both environmental arts and food sovereignty, group building and ground rules for participation, intro to Biological Corridor

Eric Holt-Gimenez. “Food, Security, Food Justice or Food Sovereignty?: Crises, Food Movements and Regime Change.” In Alkon & J. Agyeman (Eds.). *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011, 309-330.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture\\_in\\_Costa\\_Rica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture_in_Costa_Rica)

**Saturday, May 12 – San Isidro Mural Project 1:** supermarkets and small producers

9-12 PM Agri-Cultura Foro: Agricultural Challenges in a Globalized World

Forum with small producers in Perez Zeledon

Freddy Morera, Asopro Veracrúz, “The Struggle of Bean Producers”

Luis Román, Union of Independent Producers, “The Reality of the Agricultural Sector”

<https://upiav.com/>

Deborah Barndt, “Connecting Food Movements Across Borders Through Art”

Presentation of murals by Raquel Bolaños and launch of magazine La Agrícola

[https://www.facebook.com/RevistaAgroecologica/?hc\\_ref=ARTHFPfbCkZoFboKz80iAG7-alAD6qEChfqqAGj0sazJM\\_jWAaauy\\_za7AXMrxjieJk&fref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/RevistaAgroecologica/?hc_ref=ARTHFPfbCkZoFboKz80iAG7-alAD6qEChfqqAGj0sazJM_jWAaauy_za7AXMrxjieJk&fref=nf)

12:30 – 2 PM Lunch

2 – 4 PM Supermarket tours

4 PM - Introduction of mural project with local artist Raquel Bolaños

**Sunday, May 13 – Day of reflection and planning**

AM – Visit to Eduardo’s finca, introduction to Corridor by Luis Angel

PM – Preparation for Longo Mai (youtube videos)

Slide show on mural projects

**Monday, May 14 – Long Mai**

8 – Welcome ceremony and introduction to three artistic projects

12 – Lunch with homestay families

2 – Preparation of materials for art projects

3 – Interviews with 2 community elders (documented by our students)

5 – Dinner

7 – Talks by community leaders & artists on Food Sovereignty: Beans and Pineapples

**Tuesday, May 15 – Long Mai**

6 – Work in vegetable gardens

- 8 – 4 Group work on artistic projects
- 5 – Dinner
- 7 – Party with food, music, dance

### **Wednesday, May 16 – Longo Mai**

- 6 – 12 Continued work on environmental art projects
- 12 – Shared lunch
- 1 – Tour of three final projects and reflection on them
- 4 – Farewell with music and food

### **Thursday, May 17 – San Isidro Mural Project 2**

Agriculturalist Fair in San Isidro, interviews with farmers and vendors  
Collaborative production of murals (individual and collective) around issues of beans and seeds

### **Friday, May 18 – San Isidro Mural Project 3**

Complete murals at Agricultural Fair

### **Saturday, May 19 – Alexander Skutch Community Festival**

Share mural from San Isidro market, visual art and music from Long Mai  
Experience community artisan, dance, theatre, food, etc.  
Some students could facilitate arts-based community activities

### **Sunday, May 20 – Alexander Skutch Community Festival**

Festival in the morning  
Evaluation of course in the afternoon  
Closing ceremony

### **Grading Scheme, Assignment Submissions, and Lateness Penalties**

The grading scheme for ENVS courses conforms to the 9-point system used in other undergraduate programs at York. Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation (e.g., A, B, C+, etc.) or an equivalent percentage grade. (See detailed descriptions in the FES *Regulations* or in the BES **Handbook**) The final grade for the course will be calculated using the weighting formula established above for this course.

### **Instructions for Submission and Return of Final Assignments**

In cases where students will be handing an assignment late in the term and the Professor or Teaching Assistant will not have an opportunity to return the graded assignment in a subsequent class/tutorial, special arrangements must be made to accommodate students' wishes to have the graded assignment returned to them:

- a) students must submit their final assignment with a self-addressed, stamped, envelope if they want to receive the graded assignment. If the assignment is



more than 5 pages in length they are advised to have the post office weigh the package to determine appropriate postage required.

- b) if students do not attach a self-addressed stamped envelope, they must attach a document with their course details, their name and student number and their signature and a statement confirming they do not wish to have the assignment returned to them.

Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, **the assignments for ENVS courses must be received by the Instructor or Teaching Assistant on the due date specified for the assignment.** Assignments can be handed in to the instructor or sent by email.

### **Lateness Penalty**

Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized 5% of the value of the assignment *per day* that the assignments are late. For example, if an assignment worth 20% of the total course grade is a day late, 1 point out of 20 (or 5% per day) will be deducted. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc. will be entertained by the Course Director **only** when supported by written documentation (e.g., a doctor's letter). **Please note Faculty policy on electronic submission of material, "That all written or visual work that is submitted as part of an academic program must be submitted in hardcopy (not electronically), unless previously agreed to by the instructor or advisor."** Submission must be received in hard copy form on due date or will be considered late.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Group Work.** This course may require group work. Group work, when done well, can teach collaborative skills that are essential in many work contexts. It can enrich everyone's learning by making all students resources for each other, and can create a synergy based on the diversity of histories and perspectives of the group members. To ensure that group work is a positive experience, each group should first discuss and agree to ground-rules for effective group work such as: 1) active listening and facilitating equal participation of all; 2) respecting different opinions and different ways of knowing or communicating; 3) considering issues of power, difference and discrimination; 4) identifying a clear path of communication with Course Director should there be issues/concerns; and 5) making clear a path of action for issues regarding equity-related or harassment concerns.

#### Useful articles on working through equity issues in groups:

Burke, Bev et al. "Thinking Equity." *Education for Changing Unions*. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002, 74-77.

Narayan, Uma. "Working Together Across Differences: Some Considerations on Emotions and Political Practice." *Hypatia*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Summer, 1998), pp. 31-47.

### **Inclusivity in the BES Program**

The BES Program strives to include a broad range of perspectives and substantive material in its course offerings. Central to a clear understanding of environmental problems is the link between exploitation of the natural world, and justice issues related to racism, gender inequity, and poverty. An inclusion of non-western perspectives is therefore essential to a fruitful discussion of North-South issues, and environmental debates generally.

### **Religious Observance Days**

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for in-class test or examination pose such a conflict for you, contact the Course Director within the first three weeks of class. Similarly, should an assignment to be completed in a lab, practicum placement, workshop, etc., scheduled later in the term pose such a conflict, contact the Course director immediately. Please note that to arrange an alternative date or time for an examination scheduled in the formal examination periods (December and April/May), students must complete and Examination Accommodation Form, which can be obtained from Student Client Services, W120 Bennett Centre for Student Services or online at [http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/exam\\_accommodation.pdf](http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/exam_accommodation.pdf)

### **Academic Honesty**

York students are required to maintain high standard of academic integrity and are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty as set out by York University and by the Faculty of Environmental Studies. Please read the *Senate Policy on Academic Honesty* (which can be found as Appendix One of the *Academic Regulations of the Faculty of Environmental Studies* or in the University Policies and Regulations section of the *York University Undergraduate Programs Calendar*), available at: <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm>

There is also an academic integrity website with complete information about academic honesty. Students are expected to review the materials on the Academic Integrity website at:

<http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academicintegrity>

### **HPRC Review Process**

### **FES GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR ETHICAL REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN UNDERGRADUATE COURSES**

York students are subject to the York University Policy for the ethics review process for research involving Human Participants. All research activity with human participants

and minimal risk as part of this course has to undergo ethical review. Please consider the following definitions:

- “**Human participants**” in research will be defined as persons who provide data or information to the researcher which are typically not part of their professional capacity.
- The draft **definition of funded research** from the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee [HPRC] is: “‘Funded’ will refer to all research that is receiving money that is in response to a specific proposal and administered by the university. Research using monies not administered by the University, and/or not in response to a specific proposal, will be considered ‘unfunded’.”
- The **definition of minimal risk** being used is the one given in the SSHRC/NSERC/MRC *Tri-Council Policy Statement Aethical Conduct for Research involving Humans@* (August, 1998): “If potential subjects can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the subject in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research, then the research can be regarded as within the range of minimal risk.” (p. 1.5)

**INSERT:[here individual instructors need to add specifics: e.g. This course has a requirement of a 10 page research paper which will involve interviewing city officials on urban water problems. A review of the research ethics problems, informed consent procedures, etc. will be provided in the second week of classes on September xxx]**

HPRC review forms are available at: <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/resources/acadreg/>

### **Student Conduct**

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour. Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. A statement of the policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on the York website at:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=202>

### **Student Accessibility Services**

York provides services for students with disabilities (including physical, medical, learning and psychiatric disabilities) needing accommodation related to teaching and evaluation methods/materials. It is the student's responsibility to register with disability services as early as possible to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance

notice. *You are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with each professor to discuss your accommodation needs.* Failure to make these arrangements may jeopardize your opportunity to receive academic accommodations.

Additional information is available at <http://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/> or from disability service providers:

### **Student Accessibility Services (SAS)**

Tel: 416-736-5755

E-mail: [sasinfo@yorku.ca](mailto:sasinfo@yorku.ca)

#### **Hours of Operation**

- 9am to 4:30pm – Monday, Wednesday, Friday
- 9am to 7pm – Tuesday
- 10am to 4:30pm - Thursday

Throughout June, July and August, SAS offices are closed noon-1pm each day and they close at 3:30pm on Fridays.

- Office for Persons with Disabilities: Room N110 of the Bennett Centre for Student Services , 416-736-5297,
- Learning and Psychiatric Disabilities Programs - Counselling & Development Centre: Room N110 of the Bennett Centre for Student Services, 416-736-5297, <http://cds.info.yorku.ca>
- ACCESSIBILITY, WELL-BEING AND COUNSELLING (AWC) CENTRE AT GLENDON  
Glendon students should check with AWC to confirm hours of operation/closures.  
Location: 111A Glendon Hall Tel: 416-487-6709  
Website: [www.glendon.yorku.ca/counselling](http://www.glendon.yorku.ca/counselling)

### **Student Counselling & Development (SCD).**

Personal Counselling Services (PCS) aims to help York students realize, develop and fulfill their personal potential in order to maximally benefit from their university experience and manage the challenges of university life. Students come to PCS because of a wide range of concerns including, but not limited to: depression, anxiety, abuse, stress, self-esteem, relationship issues, eating and body image as well as issues related to sexuality.

#### **Personal Counselling Services provides:**

- Short-term individual, couple, and group counselling services to York University students
- Personal development workshop and workshop series
- Crisis intervention for York students
- Consultation to the York Community regarding students in distress/crisis and issues related to mental health in general
- Critical incident response debriefings and consultations
- Clinical training for graduate students in Psychology, Social Work, and Psychotherapy
- Learn more about other York University resources related to mental health and

wellness at York at <http://mhw.info.yorku.ca/>.