

ENVR 400 - 01: ENVIRONMENTAL THOUGHT

(Winter 2026)

Prerequisite: ENVR 203

Number of credits: 3

Schedule

Monday and Wednesday 2:35 - 3:55 pm

See Course Schedule below for lecture and seminar dates

Lectures: Maass Chemistry Building (MAASS) 217

Seminars:

Burnside Hall 308 - Sieber

Burnside Hall 1214 - Janzwood

Burnside Hall 719A - Freeman

Teaching Team

Professor Freeman (she/her), instructor & coordinator

Office hours: Tuesdays 11am-1pm or by appointment

Office: 3534 Rue University, Room 23 or by Zoom

Email: julia.freeman@mcgill.ca

Professor Janzwood (she/her), instructor

Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 1:30-2:30pm -- please sign up in MyCourses

Office: Leacock Building, Room 441 or by Zoom

Email: amy.janzwood@mcgill.ca

Professor Sieber (she/her/they), instructor

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday 4-5pm (and by appointment)

Office: 411 or 428 Burnside

Email: renee.sieber@mcgill.ca

Mr. Debanjan Das

Office hours: By appointment

Email: debanjan.das@mcgill.ca

Please email the TA or instructors for logistical issues or clarifications. For more substantive issues, like content covered in a missed class, please email a class member. Use your University Email account and include ENVR 400 in your subject line.

Course Overview

Scholars argue that the environmental and social crises facing humanity in the Anthropocene demand fundamental transformation of the dominant social, economic and political systems. This course explores the role of environmental thinking in the emergence and potential resolution of environmental challenges. While reading different genres, students will be asked to consider different disciplinary and analytical lenses as they advance their understanding of what constitutes environmental thought. How do different ways of writing and thinking about ‘the environment’ inform our understanding of environmental challenges and the strategies we adopt to overcome them? How can we best “command hope” and foster change that will address the global sustainability challenges we currently face? How do we get there, move beyond the problem through a theory of change, to a potential response?

Through lectures and seminars, students will enhance their interdisciplinary skills for reconciling difficult conflicts grounded in the rift between ecological realities and normative systems (e.g., economic, social, political, cultural) as well as exploring the collaborative capacities of these diverse ways of knowing. Students also will reflect upon and apply their learning as they consider theories of change and transformation in a final essay that examines how a particular environmental challenge arose and their response to it. Students in the course will read assigned material, attend lectures and discussions based on them, participate actively in seminars, guide class participation as discussion leaders, collaborate with their peers and research/write an essay bringing these concepts together.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will have the opportunity to:

- Engage with course texts in preparation for seminars and lectures so that they can contribute constructively;
- Examine (in a seminar-style learning environment) the central ideas found in the course materials, actively and constructively participate and produce robust critiques and/or thoughtful questions and comments about course texts;
- Gain experience in developing and presenting a seminar;
- Analyse and discuss environmental thought using multiple disciplinary lenses in both written and oral forms;
- Identify and critically reflect upon the values, worldviews, policies and systems that sustain ecological degradation, those that might promise environmental sustainability and those that might cause us to be hopeful in spite of despair;
- Reflect upon and apply course themes to an essay that explores how a particular environmental challenge arose, potential solutions and ways in which we might be hopeful.

McGill University is located on Tiohti:áke (or Montreal) which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange, notably amongst the Anishinabeg and Kanien’keha:ka nations (the latter being one of six nations composing the Haudenosaunee confederacy). We acknowledge and refuse the ongoing harms perpetuated by colonialism and thank the diverse Indigenous peoples whose presence marks this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

Required Course Materials

We will discuss the following texts:

- Homer-Dixon, Thomas. *Commanding Hope: The Power We Have to Renew A World in Peril*. Toronto: Knopf Canada, 2020.
- Kimmerer, Robin W. *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and The Teachings of Plants*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Milkweed Editions, 2013.
- *No More Fairy Tales: Stories to Save Our Planet*. edited by D. A. Baden, Habitat Press, 2022.
- Various other short works and academic articles (see Course Schedule below).

Course books are available on course reserves at the library and for purchase at Librairie Paragraphe bookstore (2220 McGill College Avenue, near the corner of McGill College and Sherbrooke). We recommend you purchase the hard copies of the book because you will annotate and refer to them throughout the course. There are a few copies of *Commanding Hope* available at McGill Library if you would prefer not to purchase a hard copy.

You will be reading much but not all of these texts. Pay careful attention to the Course Schedule (below) that indicates which chapters will be read for each seminar.

Evaluation

Overview

Assessment	Due date	% of final grade
Course participation and attendance	Ongoing	20
Seminar discussion leader	Variable - Sign up early in seminar (see schedule below); your memo is due the day before the seminar by 6pm	15
Topic assessment: meeting with your seminar prof	Variable (between Feb. 12 and 27)	10
Essay outline	Friday, March 13th at 6pm	20
Final essay	Monday, April 13th at 6pm	35
<i>Total</i>		<i>100</i>

Course participation

Students will attend lectures with the whole class and also attend smaller seminar groups to discuss the readings. The lectures introduce core concepts and frame the course texts. The seminars provide students with an opportunity to practise their capacity to read deeply and engage in a collegial interrogation of a text. These classes are what you make them so it is essential that all participants arrive well prepared and intellectually curious.

Participation is assessed over the course of the term, taking into account:

- Engagement with course materials and concepts
- Quality/depth of contributions, originality, and intellectual risk-taking
- Listening and responsiveness to peers
- Respectful and collaborative participation
- Consistency and preparation

To assess participation, the quality of your contributions is of greater importance than simply the frequency. We look less for personal feelings or opinions than for thoughtful statements grounded in the readings. That being said, being present is also necessary to participate, as we assess your participation in every seminar. To that end, please be prepared with a question of your own for each seminar and lecture. You may be asked to share your question. To help you learn each other's names, we will provide name cards for each of you. Please bring them to every class. Additional assessment details are available in MyCourses.

Classes will not be recorded. For lectures (only), if you are unable to attend due to illness, please email the teaching team, and we will send you a Zoom link to the live lecture.

Seminar discussion leader(s) & memo

Each student leads a seminar during the course. Students can choose a seminar, although it is first-come-first-served. They can sign up individually or in pairs to serve as discussion leaders. Facilitators are responsible for the following:

- Using their creativity to support a seminar discussion intended to better understand the readings.
- Selecting 8-10 key passages from the readings. Facilitators will identify the passages using page and paragraph numbers in class, and all students will read the passages together.
- Facilitators will explain why they chose this passage -- for example, does it challenge the reader? Illustrate a central theme of the reading? Articulate the main argument? Run contrary to what the author has said elsewhere? Speak to concepts we discuss in lectures or elsewhere in the course?
- From this starting point, the class will respond to the facilitators' offering and discuss the passage together. Facilitators should solicit wide and inclusive participation from the group and are encouraged to organize icebreakers, activities or questions that foster creative engagement with these key passages.

Discussion leaders are evaluated on the preparation and quality of the facilitation of the seminar discussion. They also submit a memo detailing the passages prepared for the discussion,

including why they selected them, and their notes in preparation for their facilitation. Both a rubric and a resource to help prepare for this role will be posted in MyCourses.

If a student is in a pair, then they can choose to either submit individual memos or a single memo. If they plan to submit a joint memo, they must submit it twice in myCourses, once for each person. We appreciate facilitators submitting a joint memo to indicate with a note or formatting (ie bold) which passages and notes or questions you worked on the most).

Upload the discussion leader memo through myCourses by 6pm on the day before the discussion. Name the file as follows: lastname_firstname_ENVR400_DLMemo.docx. Submit the memo in either Word, RTF, or Adobe PDF format; no other types of files are permitted and Word documents are preferred whenever possible.

Topic scoping assessment

This assessment allows students to start thinking about their final essay. Students select a topic of their choice that includes the components listed below. We ask you to consider the following:

- **Topic:** Identify and describe a specific environmentally-related issue you will cover in your final essay (e.g., rampant forest fires in the Brazilian Amazon, microplastic pollution from personal care products, mining coltan, environmental impacts of fast fashion). Consider an appropriate scope. We want to ensure the topic suits the course objectives, can be adequately researched within the time frame and can be contained in 3,000 words
- **Theory of change:** Identify a theory of change framework to think through the challenge you've identified and your desired response. We will present some example TOC frameworks early in the semester, but there are many others you could draw upon.
- **Course connections:** Consider the role of environmental thought in how the challenge you've selected arose. What other course concepts and materials connect to this topic?
- What feedback would you like to have at this point?

You will have a meeting with your professor (seminar instructor) for approximately 10 minutes. During this meeting, you will present your topic to your seminar instructor, including your topic's scope (i.e. are you focusing on a specific region, or finding another way to keep your topic precise?), the theory of change framework you would like to use, and how it connects to course concepts and ideas. You may ask for feedback on specific areas, and you should be prepared to answer questions about your topic. A rubric is available in MyCourses. We encourage you to use the Worksheet in MyCourses to guide your preparation.

You will have the opportunity to sign up for a time with your seminar instructor's office hours during Seminar 0 on Jan. 14 (first-come, first-served), and you should be signed up by Jan. 16 at the latest. These meetings will take place between Feb. 12 and Feb. 27. If you miss this window, you lose your opportunity to complete this assessment.

The purpose of the in-class Topic Workshop session in your seminar groups (on Wed. Feb. 11) is to give you an opportunity to discuss your topic in advance of this meeting and integrate any constructive peer feedback you receive before meeting with your instructor.

Essay outline

This assignment is designed to help you prepare your essay. It requires you to gather research materials in an organized and timely way and to identify the essay's central argument before you start writing.

A successful outline explains the structure that will be used for the final essay and presents a clearly stated argument about the nature of the environmental challenge and a potential response to this challenge, presenting a theory of change as a way to command hope. The outline also summarizes the main sub-arguments that will support the argument and indicate the type of evidence that will be used. The outline should include a bibliography with a minimum of eight sources in addition to relevant course texts (be sure to include the course texts, if used, in your bibliography).

This assignment is approximately three pages. A template to use will be uploaded to MyCourses. A provisional essay title should be at the top of the page, along with the student's full name and student number, the course number, and the name of the teaching team member who facilitates your seminar. The outline portion must be submitted in the tabular format that matches the template.

Upload the assignment through myCourses by 6pm on March 13. Name the file as follows: lastname_firstname_ENVR400_Outline.docx. Please submit the assignment in either Word, RTF, or Adobe PDF format; no other types of files are permitted and Word documents are preferred whenever possible.

Write-shop

Towards the end of the semester and in the seminar, a "write-shop" will be held. The write-shop represents an opportunity for you to write a draft and share it with your peers in 2-3-person groups. Your peers will provide feedback on your writing and improve your final essay. It is also an opportunity to ask the teaching team additional questions about the final paper during class. Your draft does not need to be complete, but we encourage you to bring as complete a draft as possible so that you can receive the most relevant and helpful feedback possible.

This exercise will not be graded. However, when you submit your final essay, add a note in your submission in MyCourses on how you incorporated the feedback (this does not count towards your word limit).

Final essay

Students will write an essay on their chosen topic. The student must analyze and explain how the challenge arose, with reference to relevant environmental thought (e.g., values, worldviews, policies, and systems as discussed in class). They also must analyze and explain the role of environmental thought in responding to this challenge going forward – in other words, what is your theory of change framework, and how can we "command hope" to address this problem? We expect the student to draw on course materials for the essay.

The essay is a maximum of 3,000 words (excluding bibliography). It must be either 1.5 or double-spaced, written in a 12pt font and use 1" margins. Upload the final paper through myCourses no later than 6pm on April 13. Name the file as follows: lastname_firstname_ENVR400_Essay.docx. Please submit the final essay in either Word, RTF, or Adobe PDF format; no other types of files are permitted and Word documents are preferred whenever possible.

More detailed instructions and other information (including a rubric) will be uploaded to myCourses. We recommend that students submit first drafts for ungraded evaluation if there are any concerns.

If you would like assistance with improving your writing, consider making an appointment with the [McGill Writing Centre](#).

Late Policy

We will deduct **five percent per day for all late assignments**, including on weekends. The day begins right after the due date and time. We will not accept late assignments after five days.

“Stuff happens” clause: you may invoke the stuff happens clause on **one written** assignment and get a 3-day extension. No explanation is required. However, *you must inform your teaching team (all three instructors and TA) via email that you are invoking the clause before the deadline.*¹

AI Policy

The explosion of generative AI (LLMs like ChatGPT and Claude, diffusion models) is provoking debate for many reasons, including its environmental costs.² Each use of genAI uses fresh water and energy and often produces carbon pollution. Generative AI relies on data centres, which emit water, noise and air pollution.³ A main learning outcome in this course is to develop your ability as autonomous, critical and reflective thinkers. Relying on genAI will seriously undermine your ability to achieve this and comes at a high cognitive cost.⁴ Since genAI is trained on others' work frequently taken without their consent, its use is also effectively the theft of other people's thoughts as well as their intellectual property.

The use of genAI for course assessments must be communicated to the teaching team. Any use of such tools to generate ideas, modify your own writing must be clearly documented and discussed in detail and with critical reflection regarding the strengths and limitations of this use in a separate document titled “AI Use” handed in alongside any assessment that has used AI tools in some way.

It is solely your responsibility to make all submitted work your own, maintain academic integrity, and avoid any type of plagiarism.

¹ Adapted from Dr. Robin Mitchell, California State University, Channel Islands.

² UN Environment Programme. 2025. “AI has an environmental problem. Here's what the world can do about that.” November 13. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/ai-has-environmental-problem-heres-what-world-can-do-about>.

³ <https://www.technologyreview.com/2025/08/21/1122288/google-gemini-ai-energy/>. Note this is an industry-produced report.

⁴ For example, as reported in [Time Magazine](#), a recent study from MIT's Media Lab on LLM-assisted essay writing found that ChatGPT users had the lowest brain engagement and “consistently underperformed at neural, linguistic, and behavioral levels.” Kosmyna, Nataliya, Eugene Hauptmann, Ye Tong Yuan, et al. 2025. “Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt When Using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing Task.” Preprint, arXiv, June 10. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2506.08872>.

Suggested Course Schedule 2026

	Date	Topic	Readings	Activity or Assignment
1	Mon Jan 5	Introductions to syllabus, instructors, and course	Syllabus	Meet in (MAASS) 217
2	Wed Jan 7	Lecture: Hope & theories of change	Solnit, Rebecca. "Difficult is Not the Same as Impossible." In <i>Not Too Late: Changing the Climate Story from Despair to Possibility</i> , ed. Rebecca Solnit, and Thelma Young-Lutunatabua, 3–10. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2023. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1371143950 Macy, Joanna, and Molly Young Brown. 2014. "To Choose Life" in <i>Coming Back to Life: The Updated Guide to the Work That Reconnects</i> . Gabriola Island, BC, Canada: New Society. (Available in MyCourses)	Volunteers for first seminar on Mon Jan 19.
3	Mon Jan 12	Lecture: Systems thinking as a theory of change	Meadows, Donella. 1997. "Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System." The Sustainability Institute: 1-19 (available in MyCourses). Commanding Hope, Chapter 1. "Signals" <i>Optional:</i> Westley, Frances, Per Olsson, Carl Folke, Thomas Homer-Dixon, Harrie Vredenburg, Derk Loorbach, John Thompson, et al. "Tipping Toward Sustainability: Emerging Pathways of Transformation." <i>AMBIO</i> 40, no. 7 (November 1, 2011): 762–80. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5660049892	
4	Wed Jan 14	Seminar 0 - Demo (<i>in respective seminar rooms</i>)	Commanding Hope, Chapter 5. "The Way Hope Works" Steinberg, Paul F. 2024. "From Apocalypse to Empowerment: Reframing Climate Action." <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> 24 (4): 105–28. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/10504113062	Complete sign up for seminars Sign up for topic assessment with seminar prof
5	Mon Jan 19	Seminar 1	Commanding Hope, Chapter 8. "The False Promise of Techno-optimism" Van der Ven, Hamish, Diego Corry, Rawie Elnur, Viola Jasmine Provost, Muh Syukron, and Niklas Tappauf. 2024. "Does Artificial Intelligence Bias Perceptions of Environmental Challenges?"	First discussion leader(s) lead

			<p>Environmental Research Letters 20 (1): 014009. https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ad95a2</p> <p>Optional: Taft, Molly. “The Data Center Resistance Has Arrived,” WIRED, 14 November 2025, https://www.wired.com/story/the-data-center-resistance-has-arrived/</p>	
6	Wed Jan 21	Seminar 2	<p>Commanding Hope, Chapter 9, “The World to Come Today”</p> <p>Sultana, Farhana. 2025. “Repairing Epistemic Injustice and Loss in the Era of Climate Coloniality.” <i>Geo: Geography and Environment</i> 12 (2): e70029. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/11010467521</p> <p>Optional: Bonasia, Chris. 2025. “Gates Climate Memo Has the Right Cake—But the Wrong Icing, Scientists Say.” <i>The Energy Mix</i>, 5 November https://www.theenergymix.com/gates-climate-memo-has-the-right-cake-but-the-wrong-icing-scientists-say/</p>	
7	Mon Jan 26	Seminar 3	<p>Commanding Hope, Chapter 10, “A Contest of WITs”</p> <p>Newell, Peter. 2025. “States of Transition: A Political Economy Approach.” <i>New Political Economy</i>: 1–17. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/10880721084</p>	
8	Wed Jan 28	Seminar 4	<p>Commanding Hope, Chapter 11. “Why is Positive Change So Hard?”</p> <p>Kallis, Giorgos, Angelos Varvarousis, and Panos Petridis. 2022. “Southern Thought, Islandness and Real-Existing Degrowth in the Mediterranean.” <i>World Development</i> 157 (September): 105957. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/9532084443</p>	
9	Mon Feb 2	Seminar 5	<p>Commanding Hope, Chapter 14. “From Gondor to Washington”</p> <p>Rutting, Lucas, Joost Vervoort, Heleen Mees, et al. 2023. “Disruptive Seeds: A Scenario Approach to Explore Power Shifts in Sustainability Transformations.” <i>Sustainability Science</i> 18 (3): 1117–33. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/9850946163/</p>	
10	Weds Feb 4	Seminar 6	<p>Commanding Hope, Chapters 18. “Mindscape,” 19. “Hot Thought” and 20. “Renewing the Future”</p>	

11	Mon Feb 9	Lecture: power shifts, movements, and hope	Orr, Christopher J., and Sarah Burch. 2025. "Transformative Capacities for Navigating System Change: A Framework for Sustainability Research and Practice." <i>Sustainability Science</i> 20 (3): 975–92. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/10659313625/ Optional: Temper, Leah, Dylan McGarry, and Lena Weber. 2019. "From Academic to Political Rigour: Insights from the 'Tarot' of Transgressive Research." <i>Ecological Economics</i> 164 (October): 106379. https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/8174238066/	
12	Weds Feb 11	<i>Meet in Seminar room</i>	<i>None</i>	Topic workshop!
13	Mon Feb 16	Lecture: Reconciling Epistemologies	Loring, Philip A. 2020. "Chapter 1: Alienation" in <i>Finding Our Niche : Toward a Restorative Human Ecology</i> . Halifax: Fernwood Publishing (Available in MyCourses) Chapters: "Preface" & "Skywoman Falling"	<i>Topic meeting with seminar profs begin</i>
14	Weds Feb 18	Seminar 7	Remainder of Planting Sweetgrass section	<i>Topic meeting with seminar profs ctd</i>
15	Mon Feb 23	Seminar 8	Tending Sweetgrass Section (optional chapter: Witch Hazel)	<i>Topic meeting with seminar profs ctd</i>
16	Wed Feb 25	Seminar 9	From the Picking Sweetgrass Section: "Epiphany in the Beans"; "The Three Sisters"; "Mishkos Kenomagwen"; "The Honorable Harvest"	<i>Topic meeting with seminar profs ctd</i>
	Mon Mar 2	Reading Week!		
	Wed Mar 4			
17	Mon Mar 9	Seminar 10	From the Braiding Sweetgrass Section: "Footsteps of Nanabozho"; "Sitting in a Circle"; "Putting down roots"; "Umbilicaria"	
18	Wed Mar 11	Seminar 11	From the Burning Sweetgrass Section: "Windigo Footprints"; "The Sacred and the Superfund"; "Shkitagen"; "Defeating Windigo"	<i>Reminder: Your essay outlines are due this Fri.</i>
19	Mon Mar 16	Lecture: On Resistance and Hope	Whyte, Kyle. 2020. "Too Late for Indigenous Climate Justice: Ecological and Relational Tipping Points." <i>WIREs Climate Change</i> 11 (1). https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/8323080676	
20	Wed	Lecture:	Goodbody, Axel, and Adeline Johns-Putra. The	

	Mar 18	Science Fiction & Fantasy in the Anthropocene	Rise of the Climate Change Novel. The Cambridge Companion to Literature and Climate, edited by Adeline Johns-Putra and Kelly Sultzbach, Cambridge University Press, 2022, pp. 229–45.	
21	Mon Mar 23	Seminar 12	All stories from <i>No More Fairy Tales: Stories to Save Our Planet</i> . edited by D. A. Baden, Habitat Press, 2022. Paolo Bacigalupi. 2022. EFFICIENCY. pp 8-19 (1-21 in paperback) Kim Stanley Robinson. 2022. THE CARBONI. pp 73-78 (113-120 in paperback)	
22	Wed Mar 25	Seminar 13	Rasha Barrage. 2022. BLUE NATION. pp 39-45 (54-64 in paperback) Brian Burt. 2022. OASIS. pp 78-84 (121-131 in paperback) Steve Willis. 2022. Penang Fairhaven: A Visitor's Guide. pp 172-176 (282-290 in paperback)	
23	Mon Mar 30	Seminar 14	D.A. Baden, Martin Hastie, Steve Willis. 2022. CLIMATE GAMERS. pp 20-28 (22-36 in paperback) D.A. Baden. 2022. THE PITCH. pp 29-38 (37-53 in paperback) D.A. Baden. 2022. DEATH IN THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY. pp 106-132 (167-212 in paperback)	
24	Wed Apr 1	Lecture: Science Fiction as Hope	Herr, Anna-Zoë. Narratives of Hope: Imagination and Alternative Futures in Climate Change Literature. <i>Transcience: A Journal of Global Studies</i> , vol. 13, no. 2, 2022. Pp. 88-110.	
	Mon Apr 6	Easter Monday - Class is cancelled		
25	Wed Apr 8	Write Shop	<i>None</i>	Bring a draft to class
26	Mon Apr 13	Course conclusions & reflections		Final essay due

McGill Policy Statements

Language of Submission

In accord with McGill University's [Charter of Students' Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Conformément à [la Charte des droits de l'étudiant](#) de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue.

Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#). See [McGill's guide to academic honesty](#) for more information.

Additional Statements

Academic Accommodation

Students experiencing an extraordinary personal situation or a temporary illness may request additional assistance and support in order to meet certain academic obligations. The Student Affairs Office (SAO) is available to meet with students to discuss ways to provide some flexibility in the program and to accommodate particular circumstances. Students must be prepared to provide supporting documentation when seeking considerations. For more information visit or to request academic support visit the [SAO's academic considerations or support](#) page.

Basic Needs

If you have difficulty affording food or if you lack a safe and stable place to live (and believe that these circumstances may affect your performance in this course) we encourage you to contact the [Dean of Students](#), who can connect you with support services. If you feel comfortable doing so, please let a member of the teaching team know as well so we can discuss how we can best support your learning.⁵

Copyright

Instructor-generated course materials are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Copyright infringements can be subject to follow-up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

Course Evaluations

[Mercury course evaluations](#) are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We seek to promote an equitable and inclusive classroom environment. We invite you to help create a classroom where everyone can feel safe to take intellectual and emotional risks. The topics we are exploring in this class like systemic injustice and settler colonialism are often challenging intellectually and emotionally. We intend to present course materials that promote and are respectful of diversity and we ask the same of you in our discussions together. Your suggestions and feedback are encouraged and appreciated at any time in the course; we will also ask for your general (anonymous) feedback on the course approximately halfway through the term. We also encourage all students to visit office hours during the term so that we can get to know you better and can discuss any concerns or challenges that might affect your success in this course.

The University has committed to taking measures over the next five years [to enhance diversity and ensure equitable opportunities and a sense of belonging for all](#). For more information about the University's equity initiatives and resources visit [Equity at McGill](#).

Extraordinary Circumstances

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

⁵ Adapted from [Goldrick-Rab \(2017\)](#).

Grading & Assessments

The official grade in each course (which displays on the transcript) is a letter grade. The University assigns grade points to letter grades; for more information see the University's regulations on [grades and grade point averages](#).

The [University Student Assessment Policy](#) exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads. Additional policies governing academic issues that affect students can be found in the [McGill Charter of Students' Rights](#).

Harassment, Discrimination & Sexual Violence

The [Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support and Education \(OSVRSE\)](#) provides support for all members of the McGill community who have been impacted by sexual violence and works to foster a culture of consent on campus and beyond.

If you are in crisis or seeking support outside of business hours, you can call the provincial sexual violence helpline at 1-888-933-9007, which is available 24/7 in English and French.

The [Office for Mediation and Reporting](#) (OMR) is responsible for policies and processes regarding harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence; if you or someone you know is dealing with harassment, discrimination, or sexual violence then please [reach out](#) to the OMR.

For more resources on harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence see McGill's dedicated [page](#).

Health & Wellness

All of our health and wellness resources are integrated into the [Student Wellness Hub](#) (in the Brown Student Services Building). The Hub can help connect you with different types of care, including [urgent care](#), [off-campus and/or virtual care](#), [wellness resources](#), [self-directed care](#), or access to clinicians (including nurses, doctors, psychiatrists, counsellors, Access Advisors, Local Wellness Advisors, dietitians, and sexologists).

It's important to take care of your mental health. Diminished mental health can interfere with optimal academic performance. Do your best to engage in self-care and maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone -- please reach out for support when you need it. The source of symptoms might be related to your coursework; if so, please speak with one of the instructors.

[Access Advisors](#) and [Local Wellness Advisors](#) offer an excellent first step towards obtaining care. Access Advisors can help you navigate the services offered by the Student Wellness Hub, explore other on-campus resources, and access off-campus support. Local Wellness Advisors provide one-on-one appointments and facilitate tailored wellness programming.

[Keep.meSAFE](#) can also connect you with licensed counsellors for in-person, phone, chat or video counselling (free for all McGill students).

You also can refer to [Managing your climate anxiety spiral – McGill edition](#), written by Prof. Janzwood and Joshua Medicoff. In it, you'll find a variety of techniques to manage your anxiety and what to do when things get overwhelming.

If you are feeling desperate and hopeless and are considering hurting yourself or someone else, call 9-1-1.

If you or another McGill community member is in immediate danger and you are at the downtown campus, you can call Campus Security at 514-398-3000. If you are at the Macdonald campus, you can call 514-398-7777.

Inclusive Learning Environment

We endeavour to provide an inclusive learning environment in this course. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with a member of the teaching team and/or [Student Accessibility and Achievement](#).

The University is committed to maintaining teaching and learning spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in course contexts may be cause for disciplinary action.

Electronic Devices

No audio or video recording of any kind is allowed in class without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Mobile computing and communications devices are permitted in class as negotiated by the class (for more information see these [guidelines](#)).

Preferred Pronouns

Please email the teaching team if you would like us to refer to you by a different name than the [name indicated](#) in your student record or to inform us of your preferred pronouns.

Sustainability

McGill has policies and initiatives to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill. For more information see the [Office of Sustainability](#).

Student Services

[Student Services](#) offers many excellent resources including the [Career Planning Service](#), [Campus Life & Engagement](#), the [First Peoples' House](#), and [International Student Services](#).