CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRADUATES!

We send you wishes of health, success, and joy.

ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE – SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

“Tree shapes show up everywhere – in the patterns of rivers or in the creases of the brain. And even in the veins of the human heart.”   Kaitlyn Shannon, MSE Reporter

As the MSE Annual Public Lecture came to a close, the room echoed with inspiration.

“I could listen to that again.”
“She’s so passionate!”
“That was beautiful, wasn’t it?”

Though she spent only a brief hour and a half with McGill faculty, staff, students and community members, Professor Nalini Nadkarni easily captured their hearts. Her contagious passion and drive left audience members inspired to pursue their own dreams the way that Nadkarni has pursued hers. She had the audience laughing, smiling, and applauding throughout the lecture, and the listeners leapt into a standing ovation when her talk came to an end.

Don’t miss this article, and the podcast!
SO MANY NEW COURSES! SO LITTLE TIME!

The MSE is having a mega-promotion on new courses!

For those who are interested in a Montreal Urban Sustainability Experience, we have two new summer courses in May: "Unearthing Montreal’s Urban Context" (ENVR480, 3 credits), and "Montreal Urban Sustainability Analysis" (ENVR490, 3 credits). These courses come in a package of two, and must be sold together.

You’re starting a job or going away in May? Then how about a course in the fall term on “Environmental Virtue Ethics” (ENVR380, 3 credits)? What’s that? Well, the idea of this course is to expand upon the “Thoreau Experience”, offered in a weekend retreat last year, into a full term course. It can also be also be used to satisfy ENVR400 program requirements. You will explore such topics as consumerism, the ethics of genetically modifying crops, and the neurobiology of virtue.

Or maybe you just want something in a smaller size? Perhaps a weekend retreat at the Gault Estate in Mont Ste-Hilaire (ENVR491, worth 1 credit) is more your speed? It’s being offered again this year.

Whatever your need, the MSE has an experience to suit your tastes!

For a detailed description of these courses, and registration dates, drop down to “Reminders” below…

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEGROWTH IN THE AMERICAS

The Montreal International Conference on Americas
May 13-19, 2012
Montreal, Quebec (various venues)

Speakers include: David Suzuki, William Tucker, John Fullerton, Alain Gras, Joan Mongeau, Elizabeth Peredo Beltrán, Juliet François Schneider

Degrowth in the Americas

Rees, Mary Evelyn-Martinez-Alier, Serge Schor, Peter Victor,

WANT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

MONTREAL CONFERENCE TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES TO GROWTH

Sustaining our future means rethinking the relationship of economic growth to human well-being and environmental integrity. The International Conference on Degrowth in the Americas meets this May in Montreal to explore the possibilities of a post-growth world.

From May 13-19, 2012, Montreal will host academics, activists, artists, environmentalists and indigenous peoples for the International Conference on Degrowth in the Americas. A fixation on economic growth is at the root of our environmental issues and social inequalities. Degrowth challenges traditional economic paradigms that fail to account for environmental and social costs and are obsessively driven by GDP and other flawed measures of well-being. Degrowth aims to achieve human happiness and well-being with less material consumption. Family, music, art, culture, community, and meaningful employment are some values that drive more qualitative increases in well-being. These issues are a priority for many people around the world, as demonstrated most recently by the Occupy Movement. A new way forward that increases both environmental and social justice is essential.
Building on degrowth conferences in Paris in 2008 and Barcelona in 2010, the conference will place the décroissance movement that began in Europe in the context of the Americas. The Conference will be hosted jointly by Concordia University, HEC, Université de Montréal, McGill University, and UQAM.

Registration is now open at http://montreal.degrowth.org

Montreal Contact :
Julie Anne Ames
Conference Coordinator
International Conference on DeGrowth, Montréal 2012
McGill University, Department of Geography & School of Environment

GREEN CAREERS WEEK

“You’ll be much better at your job if you are doing what you really enjoy.”
Opalka thoroughly enjoys her work. However, she advises students interested in this field to remember: “It’s not enough simply to care about the planet. You need to be a useful contributor, because it’s actually quite complicated.”

The McGill School of Environment teamed up with McGill Career Planning Services to launch “Green Careers Week,” a series of events designed to raise student awareness of environment jobs.

The keynote speaker, an environmental lawyer named Katia Opalka, told the audience about her experiences working in the world of “green careers.” Opalka completed both undergraduate and law degrees at McGill, and is now a specialist in Canadian environmental law, as well as an adjunct professor with the McGill School of Environment.

Read the article here >

Here’s a great site to read about a career in environment >>>
IN THE L.O.O.P., DOWN IN PERU

**MSE Grad Starts Up Environmental Social Enterprise in Peru**

Irene Hofmeijer, who graduated from the McGill School of Environment program in 2010, has taken her knowledge down south to Peru, where she has started up a social enterprise called LOOP (Life Out of Plastic), which raises awareness about plastic pollution.

The idea was born one evening at her Prince Arthur apartment in Montreal, when her roommate encouraged her that if she really wanted to make a difference, she needed to "pick one issue, just one that really gets to you, and try to fix it."

Read the article about her work here >

**Irene Hofmeijer, Bachelor of Science Granted: May 2010**
Major Environment - Ecological Determinants of Health Domain - Population

**3M NATIONAL STUDENT AWARDS**

For many years, 3M Canada has provided scholarships and awards for college and university students across Canada. Recently, the company decided to consolidate and leverage its support by strengthening its partnership with the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE). A national award for students is not only a welcome complement to STLHE's award programs, but it also marks an exciting beginning for students across Canada to distinguish themselves as part of a unique learning community.

**John Alex Pritz**
3rd Year, McGill School of the Environment; Ecological Determinants of Health – Cellular

Alex's nomination presents a remarkable story of international conscience and willingness to do difficult and impactful work in developing countries, including Haiti after its devastating earthquake. Emerging work on campus, in Senate and elsewhere, augments this work. Alex is making a difference in some very challenged and challenging environments. He is a very good relationship builder, especially across cultures. As a result of the Haiti work, Alex co-founded Developing Pictures, a now international student film group with chapters at McGill and Cornell University.

After receiving an inaugural McGill Dalai Lama fellowship for the Iwastology Program (Iwasto being Fillipino for to make right, and wastology being the study of waste), Alex spent two months in the Philippines putting this project into action, teaching high schools students about our world of waste through the lens of exploratory filmmaking.

Alex does not use many "I" statements, but rather gives credit to anyone else that he has worked with. He says he came to University to gain the tools necessary to start working on what he considers to be the most pressing issues facing his generation. He has a grasp on the challenges that face students and leads by example.

Read about 3M awards here >
NOW IS THE TIME TO NOMINATE YOUR FAVOURITE T.A. FOR AN AWARD

MSE Award for Teaching Assistance Excellence

The McGill School of Environment recognizes the contributions of our Teaching Assistants (TA) through our Award for Teaching Assistance Excellence. This award is given to an outstanding TA who has helped students in an effective and stimulating manner or has excelled in the quality of feedback during marking of written work and oral presentations.

Nominations will be accepted for TAs of any ENVR course in the Fall and Winter terms. The name of the recipient will be announced in April of each year. Recipients will receive a letter of commendation along with a cheque of $200.


Submit your nomination form by email here:

Click here to see the names of the T.A.’s per course:

PERCEPTIONS ON ENVIRONMENT

Three Takes on These Troubling Times by Sylvain Comeau

Headlines have been supplying no shortage of economic gloom recently, with financial markets whipsawing wildly in response. Some nations teeter on the brink, while others debate the costs of throwing them a lifeline.

We recently spoke to three professors with different perspectives on economic matters, and ask them to explain what’s going on. From the alleged decline of the U.S. to the havoc in Europe, from the fallout of the financial crisis to the environmental impact of economic growth, they offer frank, insightful and sometimes unorthodox views.

One of the interviewees is our own faculty lecturer, Prof. Thomas Naylor, MSE/Dept. of Economics.

Read the entire article here >
The Lost Bird Project: “Forgetting is Another Kind of Extinction”

In late March, the MSE assisted in the promotion of a film titled, “The Lost Bird Project,” which was showcased at FIFA (the International Festival of Films on Art) in Montreal.

The film tells the story of Todd McGrain, an artist whose passion for birds leads him to create five enormous statues of North American birds that were driven to extinction by the modern age. He wants to use his sculptures to commemorate the lives of these birds, and to remind the world of this loss.

AWARDS

Faculty of Science Undergraduate Research Awards (SURA)

Information for Summer 2012 to be posted on SURA website soon.

Science Undergraduate Research Awards - SURAs - are for both Canadian and international McGill students registered in a science undergraduate program. First offered in Summer 2007, SURAs are made possible by funding from the Dean of Science and participating research supervisors. For Summer 2011, SURAs will be valued at $5600 minimum. SURA recipients will engage in 16 weeks of full-time research and development activity under the supervision of a McGill Science professor holding grant funding - they will gain research experience in an exciting academic setting, while receiving financial support.

Application deadline: differs by department – see 2011 deadlines for approximations

For more information and full eligibility criteria see: http://www.mcgill.ca/science/research/ours/sura >
WE DID IT AGAIN! WE SWEPT THEM AWAY!

The 3rd Annual MSE versus Geography Ecospiel was held March 4 at the Baie d’Urfe Curling Club, by Kathy Roulet

For a second year in a row, dozens of MSE and Geography students embraced the Canadian winter by entering the annual McGill Ecospiel. Held at the Baie d’Urfe Curling Club on March 4, curlers made the trek west on train and foot — giving them time to plan strategy and wake up. Instruction was provided at the beginning of each draw, and although needed by most, everyone was quick to get the hang of it and we turned out some real pros. As the games began, the normally friendly MSE/Geography relations turned competitive — and draws, take-outs and peels were thrown down the ice with only one purpose in mind — to take home the new Ecospiel Trophy (of course, made from recycled materials)! In the end, the MSE teams outplayed the Geographers — in numbers and in overall points. There was some discussion about weighting the scores to make it more “equitable” but in the end the words of our own Karla Ekdom-Delorme rang true: “you come out to win, or you don’t bother coming out”. So equity was thrown aside, the MSE was declared the winner, and it was agreed that for next year the scoring system, designed by a Geographer, would need to be improved. Congratulations to all the great curlers on the MSE and Geography teams! We hope to see everyone on the rink again next year!

Rebuttal by Nigel Roulet – I thought it important to set the record straight and write a little piece to correct the misrepresentation over curling:

While it is true that the students from the MSE outnumbered the Geographers the weighting system used to determine the MSE won was biased. Given the variance among the team’s performance (remember ENVR 301?) I would argue there was no significant difference between the two units. There was a Geography team that scored an identical six point in the closest to the button final competition as did a team from the MSE. Why then should all the other closest to the button scored be prorate according to the number of participants from each unit is beyond me. If any weighting should be done it should have given more weight to Geography scores because the probably on winning was lower because of fewer participants — a 8/12 chance for the MSE compared to a 4/12 chance for Geography. However, Geographers, being gracious accepted that the Ecospiel ended in a tie. But no the MSE was not willing to accept this and insist on developing an ad hoc weighting system that no one could understand and those who developed could not explain — the magical result was the MSE came out on top. Again the Geographer displayed their grace, took the ethical high road, and let the MSE keep the trophy for the year, knowing it is the moral victory of doing the honourable thing that really counts in the end. One can only hope the MSE will spend the year looking at the trophy and will end the end search their soles and rise next year to higher moral ground.

Nigel Roulet, Department of Geography AND Associate of the MSE AND former Director of the MSE AND Chair of the founding committee of the MSE!
REMINDERS

Do you want to hear about the diverse and interesting research being carried out by Environment students? Sure you do!

The Spring Honours Symposium will be held on the afternoon of Monday, April 16th (exact place to be confirmed). Students finishing their Honours by the end of the winter 2012 term presenting the results of their research to their supervisors and peers. You are welcome to cheer them on, to ask questions about their work, and maybe for some – to see if Honours something that may interest you as well.

Question? Contact Kathy Roulet (you know who she is, right?)

New MSE Courses:

This summer the McGill School of Environment will offer two new courses about urban sustainability. These designed by students, focus on providing the knowledge and skills required to identify and implement susta changes in urban environments.
ENVR 480: Unearthing Montreal's Urban Context
Co-taught by Dr. Elena Bennett and Dr. Sylvie De Blois
Mon-Fri 10 am - 12 pm, May 7 – June 1, 2012

This course focuses on the role of place and history in the creation of the environment in which we currently live. Students will develop a strong understanding of the repercussions of human activity on the environment and how the environment affects our own activities. Montreal’s history, and the natural history of the Island, will be heavily emphasized as the case study for the students’ research and project. They will be versed in Montreal’s history and that of the aboriginal people who were on the island before European settlers; they will develop a strong understanding of how Montreal came to be as they know it through trips to various Montreal museums, and discussions with experts on Montreal’s natural, built, and social histories.

ENVR 490: Montreal Urban Sustainability Analysis
Co-taught by Dr. Pete Parker and Dr. Adam Millard-Ball
Mon-Fri 1 pm - 3 pm, May 7 – June 1, 2012

This course focuses on assessing Montreal as a sustainable city. Working as a team, students and professors will audit the city through workshops, discussions, and field trips. Urban agriculture, green-buildings, transportation, energy, and policy will be addressed to assess how far Montreal has progressed towards its goal of becoming a sustainable city. Local experts will share their experiences with sustainability, highlighting the ups and downs of initiating a sustainable urban project. Students will develop and gain hands-on experience to appreciate the many facets of urban sustainability and the associated actions required for change, realize the global context of sustainability, and be able to apply lessons from Montreal to other cities around the world.

Registration for summer courses begins May 6, on Minerva.

ENVR 480, sec. 01, CRN 885, term=201205, 3 credits
ENVR 490, sec. 03, CRN 886, term=201205, 3 credits
For U0 and U1 students (in 2012-2013) – ENVR 380 will be offered downtown in the fall term. Environmental Virtue Ethics (ENVR 380) is an open-enrollment 3-credit elective for U2 students and above. This course can also be used to satisfy ENVR 400 program requirements. The concept of the class is to allow more students to have the 'Thoreau Retreat' experience but who were not able to take it because of their program year or because of the enrollment cap. The idea of the retreat has been expanded into a full 3-credit class on Environmental Virtue Ethics which will meet in a bi-weekly classroom component. No background in philosophy is required; this is an introductory course on Environmental Virtue Ethics that will guide students through a 2005 collection of essays edited by Ronald Sandler and Philip Cafaro that covers topics ranging from academic theory to its applications in redressing subjects ranging from consumerism, to the ethics of genetically modifying crops, and even the neurobiology of virtue. Students will also be reading Walden and working on the same course assignments for the retreat, including the workbook. Due to the limited capacity at Gault, activities for this course will instead be centered on a daytrip to Mount Royal to find out about its unique history and hidden biodiversity. The final grade is based on participation, short exams, the notebook, and a final paper.

See registration dates below.

For U2 students (in 2012-2013) – ENVR 491: Thoreau Retreat, is a limited enrollment 1-credit elective for incoming U1 and U0 MSE students. This is an immersion course designed for new students. The course aims to bring students together so that they can begin networking with their classmates at a weekend retreat at McGill’s Gault Estate. Thoreau’s classic work in nature romanticism Walden will be studied in light of Environmental Virtue Ethics, an exciting new inroad in environmental ethics that looks at alternate paradigms of human thriving and personal excellence in harmony with the biosphere in general and with local biomes in particular. Students will be reading Walden with the help of a reading guide and short assignment workbook. At the Estate, students will share their reflections on Walden, work on assignments together, and engage in group activities such as hiking through the nature reserve. The final grade is based on participation, degree of thoroughness in working with the assignments, and their completed workbook (which will be graded and returned). Retreat is scheduled for the weekend of October 12-14, 2012.

See registration dates below.

For U2 students (in 2012-2013) – ENVR 301 will be offered downtown in the fall term, and at Macdonald campus in the winter term. will not be offered in the winter, downtown.

For U3 students (in 2012-2013) – ENVR 400 will be offered downtown in both the fall and winter terms, and at Macdonald campus in the fall term.

Course Registration for Summer 2012 and Fall 2012:

Summer 2012:

U3 and U4 students – Tuesday, March 6, 2012

All other students – Thursday, March 8, 2012

Fall 2012:

Students entering U3 – Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Students entering U2 – Thursday, March 29, 2012

All other returning undergraduate students – Tuesday, April 3, 2012
DON'T WAIT until the last minute to figure out what you want to take. Make a point of visiting Kathy Roulet to discuss your program and course options before then.

Her drop-in hours are:

Downtown Campus – Monday and Tuesday mornings, 9:00-11:30

Macdonald Campus – Wednesday and Thursday mornings, 9:00-11:30

If you want to double-check whether Kathy has had to cancel or re-schedule her hours for some reason, see the website:  
http://www.mcgill.ca/mse/students/student-resources/ugadvising

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GIVE YOUR 2 CENTS WORTH!

Do you remember Mel Lefebvre, the MSE Reporter from last year? Well, she is doing her Masters in Journalism at Concordia and is a co-host on CKUT’s environmental radio show, Ecolibrium.

Do you have something to say?

Every Tuesday, Montreal's only English environmental radio show airs at 11:00am, on CKUT 90.3 FM. If you are working on an interesting project, have an opinion on the state of the environment, or want to share some anecdotes and solutions on one of the environmentally dubious periods in history, then please send a message to Ecolibrium co-host Mel Lefebvre to find out how you can spread the word to Montreal listeners.

MSE SOCIAL MEDIA

The MSE BLOG is run by the MSE journalist, Kaitlyn Shannon. Do take some time to peruse through its pages, as there is some wonderful reporting being showcased. You can also post your comments to the articles. Don’t be shy! Maybe your thoughts will spark an interest in someone else.

Join the MSE on FACEBOOK.

To interact with McGill School of Environment you need to sign up for Facebook first. It’s free and anyone can join. Already a member? Log in.

AT THE LIBRARY

If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need. ~ Cicero

What do MSE students and staff read? Find Out Here >
STUDENT GROUPS

McGill Environment Students' Society  Read More >

LINKS

Environmental News Network (ENN).

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

Check out the MSE's web pages on careers:

MSE Career Centre – useful new links:
   www.workingoverseas.com/mcgill - The Big Guide to Living and Working Overseas
No longer printing these directories; they are now on-line only:
   Career Directory
   http://www.mediacorp.ca/tcd - Use The Career Directory online and search jobs currently posted at
employers in this year's edition of The Career Directory. Click on the "Online Career Directory"
button.
   Top 100 Employers
   http://www.eluta.ca/search_top_employers - Search Jobs from Canada's Top Employers

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