



EDST 588 Environmental Philosophy and Education: Adult Environmental Education

W2 term, January 2017

Thursdays, 1:00-4:00pm

Room: Ponderosa Commons, 1215

Instructor: Pierre Walter

<http://edst.educ.ubc.ca/facultystaff/pierre-walter/>

(604) 822-9231, Office: 3059 Ponderosa Commons

Email: pierre.walter@ubc.ca

Environmental learning for adults (and children) takes place in all sorts of informal learning contexts: in museums, science centers, national parks, botanical gardens, zoos and nature centers; in ecotourism, nature walks, bird-watching, hiking, farming, food co-ops and natural food stores; in community gardens, garbage dumps, ecovillages, kayaking, beach-combing, canoeing, scuba diving; and within the environmental movement at large. Environmental learning also takes place in various nonformal education programs: in workshops, experiential outdoor education, plant walks, museum outreach programs, interpretive park programs, sustainability initiatives, and community education. Finally, of course, environmental learning takes place in formal education programs – within and through formal schooling and higher education programs which offer graded classes, credit courses and environmental studies degrees, practica, laboratories, certificates, study in experimental farms, botanical expeditions, greenhouse experiments and so on.

The focus of this course is on informal and nonformal adult learning and education, but UBC students interested in formal and / or children's environmental education – in schools and higher education – are also welcome, and may freely pursue their interests in course assignments and discussions.

The course provides a solid grounding in the philosophical traditions and educational practices of adult environmental education. It is a seminar-style course where students will be encouraged to contribute their own ideas, knowledge, perspectives and experience to the class; or simply enjoy learning from others. Readings, class discussions and case studies of environmental education are balanced with field visits to various outdoor sites of environmental education. All students will have the opportunity to undertake an in-depth study of an environmental education program or initiative of particular interest to them. Much of the course will be spent outside.

By the end of the course, participants will have a clear understanding of the theoretical groundings of adult environmental education and its expressions in educational practice, an in-depth knowledge of numerous environmental education programs and initiatives, a well-developed foundation in case study research methods in environmental education, and (for those who choose this option) a solid research proposal for a case study in environmental education.