



ENGLISH 2262F (570)
Water and Our World: Literature, Ecology, Activism
Fall/Winter 2026 - 2027

Instructor: Sara Mai Chitty
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Course Information

Calendar Description: This course examines the relationship between water (its management and mythology) and the development of diverse cultures. This course alternates between historical examples from around the world and a specific focus on the Great Lakes Basin, including a group project for improving the ecology of the Deshkan Ziibi / Thames River.

Antirequisite(s): None.

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1000-1999, or at least 60% in any 1.0 essay course in any other subject, or permission of the Department.

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.5

Breadth: CATEGORY B

Subject Code: ENGLISH

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College
ENG 2262F
Water and Our World: Literature, Ecology, Activism

Course information:

ENG 2262F: Water and Our World - Literature, Ecology, Activism

Instructor: Sara Mai Chitty

Course Dates: September 15, 2026 - December 8, 2026

Contact Information: saramai.chitty@uwo.ca

Office hours: Locate on Brightspace

Course Description:

This course examines the relationship between water (specifically stewardship and stories) and Indigenous (specifically Anishinaabe) cultures. This course weaves between Anishinaabe and colonial history, Indigenous and non-Indigenous advocacy, and contemporary ecological concerns within the Great Lakes Basin. This participatory class includes exploring case studies, group reflection and discussion, as well as a group project toward improving the ecology of the Great Lakes watershed, such as Deshkan Ziibi/The Thames River.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Investigate the ways that Nibi (water) shapes land, relationships, cultures and ideas through discussion, mixed media and literature
- Analyze approaches to ecological stewardship of the Great Lakes Region utilizing Indigenous theories of relationality, reciprocity and responsibility
- Understand the intersections of Indigenous Law, stories, Treaties and water stewardship
- Apply Treaty-based relational and legal frameworks to ecosystem management policies, advocacy and/or activism through interactive case studies

Mode of Instruction:

In-person instruction. Class may occasionally be outside and/or online. An alternative class start and/or end time may be required on specific field days, or guest lectures. The Instructor will communicate any changes far in advance, give you time to prepare and create alternative arrangements in the event this is not feasible for your schedule.

What to expect in this class:

- Non-traditional lecture-style

- Place-based learning (field days i.e. being outside on occasion or at the Wampum Learning Lodge)
- Discussion and reflection-based learning
- Collaborative knowledge construction
- Learning with Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members
- Co-creating with classmates to produce a final group project
- Regular, interactive participation during class
- In-class assignments
- Hands-on activities

Course Materials:

Most course materials can be acquired through free and/or online sources like the Western Library, or will be provided via Brightspace and in class. The following is an estimated cost breakdown of the required course materials:

- *Theory of Water* - Leanne Simpson ~\$22
- *Manomin: Caring for Ecosystems and Each Other* - Luby et al ~ \$30
- *Life and Death of the Great Lakes* - Dan Egan ~\$23
- *Serpent Stories and Other Spiritual Beings* - Isaac Murdoch ~ \$25
- *A Short History of the Blockade* - Leanne Simpson ~ \$13
- The Water Walker (possible one month subscription fee to Crave ~ \$12)
- Waterlife (free via National Film Board [NFB])
- Bus fare, taxi, or other transportation for field days, where applicable ~ \$20
- **Optional:** *The Water Walker* by Joanne Robertson (Children's Book ~ \$20)

Total estimated costs for course materials: ~\$150

Please email the instructor if any of these materials are cost prohibitive to the detriment of you taking or participating in the class.

Methods of Evaluation:

5% Attendance and Participation

15% Oral Summary or Report

25% Reflections

25% Group Project

30% Final Project

Attendance and Participation: 5%

Due: Weekly

- Attendance is taken each class, and accounts for 2.5% of your grade
- Participation is graded via self-evaluation in conjunction with instructor approval (2.5%)

Oral Summary, Report or Analysis: 15%

Due: October 20, 2026

- Oral assignment
- Styles can include but not limited to: podcast, newscast, audio monologue; video optional
- Preferred formats .mp3; .mp4 for video,
- Topics and further instructions on Brightspace

Reflections: 25%

Due: In class, throughout the semester

- Five total at 5% each
- Completed in class
- Reflection activities typically engage the readings of that week, and/or leading up to that week
- If students will be absent, reflections can only be submitted during the following class, or online - **if they notify instructor in advance**

Group Project: 25%

Due: November 17th, 2026

- Topics and further instructions will be provided on Brightspace
- Time to form groups, plan and collaborate will be offered during class time where possible
- Presentation is mandatory on due date, however not all group members are required to deliver a presentation so long as their contributions otherwise are made clear

- 5% of the group presentation grade is a separate submission (an individual reflection on the collaboration experience)

Final Project: 30%

Due: Last Day of Class (December 8th, 2026), by midnight

- In lieu of a final exam
- Choose between:
 - 15-minute video documentary
 - 15-minute podcast or audio documentary
 - Minimum 2500-word essay
- Accepted formats: .mp3; .mp4 for video; pdf; .ppt; Word. If you are submitting your assignment using Google, please make sure appropriate permissions are granted (edit, download and view). Note: the project will be docked by 1% if I have to request permission to access.
- Further instructions and prompts available on Brightspace

Academic Considerations:

- Assignments have a two-day grace period, no questions asked (except for the attendance, participation, reflections and final project)
 - If you need an extension for the final project, you must apply for formal academic accommodations.
- Email instructor with concerns regarding due dates and extensions, or seek accommodations where applicable
 - Please speak to the instructor as soon as you realize you may miss deadlines or reflections. Failure to communicate with the instructor regarding missed deadlines, results in zero on your assignment
- Make up or alternative assignments will be made available where possible, to accommodate absences connected to grief, illness or crisis

Academic Integrity / Remote Proctoring:

1. Please review the Western Scholastic Discipline policy:
https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
2. Using Generative AI to develop, edit, draft, plan or research assignments is not permitted. If any instance emerges where Generative AI is utilized, please cite the use of AI appropriately or the assignment will not be graded.
3. Turnitin will be required for all written submissions

Tips for Success:

- Start Reading *Theory of Water* and *Life and Death of the Great Lakes* in Week One to stay on top of readings
- While readings and materials are typically available in Brightspace, they might also require purchase, subscription, or require access through Western or London Public Libraries.
- Refer to Brightspace for the most up to date information about syllabus, readings, assessments and alternative activities
- Regular communication with the instructor is encouraged, especially to proactively request extensions, or if you are at risk of, or falling behind in your readings or assignments
- In-class activities and reflections are based on the assigned materials for that week, come as prepared as you are able

Schedule of Classes, Readings, Assessments:

Week 1:

Topic: Intro to Anishinaabe inaadiziwin; The Great Lakes Watershed

Optional pre-reading: available on Bright Space

Due: Practice Reflection (no grade)

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziiwing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 2:

Co-facilitated with Upper Thames River Conservation Area

Location: Instructions on Brightspace

Topic: The Deshkan Ziibing Watershed

Read: Theory of Water - Ch 1-5 (Simpson); Serpent Stories - Ch 1 & 4 (Murdoch); Manomin (Luby et al) Intro & Ch 1, 3, 4

Due: Practice Reflection (no grade)

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziibing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 3:

Co-facilitated with Betsy Kechego (Deshkan Ziibing Anishinaabeg Nation)

Location: TBD

Topic: Visiting with the River; Anishinaabeg of the Great Lakes

Read: Serpent Stories - Ch 11 (Murdoch); Theory of Water - Ch 6-10 (Simpson); Manomin (Luby et al) - Ch 2 & 8

Listen: [Walking Along Deshkan Ziibing](#) (25m)

Due: Reflection 1 (in class)

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziibing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 4:

Co-facilitated with Sayzee Deleary (Deshkan Ziibing Anishinaabeg Nation)

Location: TBD

Topic: Water Protectors

Watch: The Water Walker (2020) (15 min)

Read/Listen: The Water Walker - Joanne Robertson (8 min)

Due: Reflection 2 (in class)

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziibing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Reading Week - no class - October 13

Suggestion: Read *A Short History of the Blockade*, *Theory of Water* and/or *Death and Life of the Great Lakes*

Week 5:

Due: Summary/Report/Short Analysis - 15%

Topic: Water Protectors Continued

Read: A Short History of the Blockade - Leanne Simpson;

["Anishinaabe time": temporalities and impact assessment in pipeline reviews | Journal of Political Ecology](#); Manomin (Luby et al) Ch 6 & 7

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziiwing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 6:

Topic: Relationships to Water

Read: "Death and Life of the Great Lakes (Egan) - Part One; Theory of Water (Simpson) Ch 11-15

Due: Reflection 3 (in class)

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziiwing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 7:

Topic: Relationships to Water

Read: "Death and Life of the Great Lakes (Egan) - Part One; Theory of Water (Simpson) Ch 11-15; Serpent Stories (Murdoch) - Ch 7 "Consequences of not Giving Offerings" and Ch 8 "Thoughts on Offerings"

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziiwing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 8:

Topic: Relationships to Water

Read: Simpson Ch 16-21, Egan - Part Two

Due: Reflection 4 (in class)

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziiwing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 9:

Due: Group Presentations

Week 10:

Topic: Personhood, Stewardship and Seven Generations

Watch: Waterlife (NFB) - documentary (1h49)

Read: “The Grammar of Animacy” - Braiding Sweetgrass, Robin Wall Kimmerer

Ch 11 - “Treaties” (Murdoch); Manomin (Luby et al) - Ch 5

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziibing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 11:

Topic: Radical Hope, future prospects for the Great Lakes & our relationships to water

Read: Egan - Part Three; Simpson Ch 22 & 23; Luby et al - Ch 9 & Epilogue; [The future beneath us: Radical hope in deep waters - Emalani Case, 2025](#); The Star People – Murdoch

Due: Reflection 5 (in class)

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziibing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

Week 12:

Topic: Aadizokaan - Water Panther & Other Stories

Final Class Instructions in Bright Space

Note: Portions, or all of class, will possibly be outside and/or alongside Deshkan Ziibing - weather and accessibility permitting. Please dress appropriately. Transportation options from campus where applicable: bus, walking, taxi, uber.

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this assessment.
- If instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs. (For example, if students need to submit X of Y assignments, this flexibility already provides consideration.)
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

Western’s Mental Health Services site provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.