

Philosophy of Nature

Professor

Nora Mills Boyd, PhD

“Dr. Nora”

(she/her/hers)

Email

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Office Location

Siena Hall 423

Office Hours

Tuesday & Thursday

1-2pm

Wednesday 2-5pm
(preferred)

and by appointment

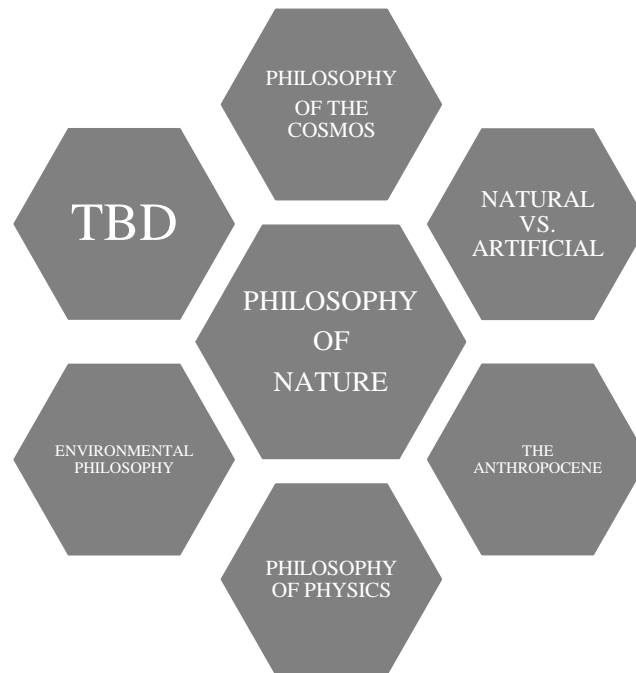
Class Meeting

Tuesday & Thursday

9:50-11:15am

Roger Bacon 302

What is nature? What is our place in it?



About This Course

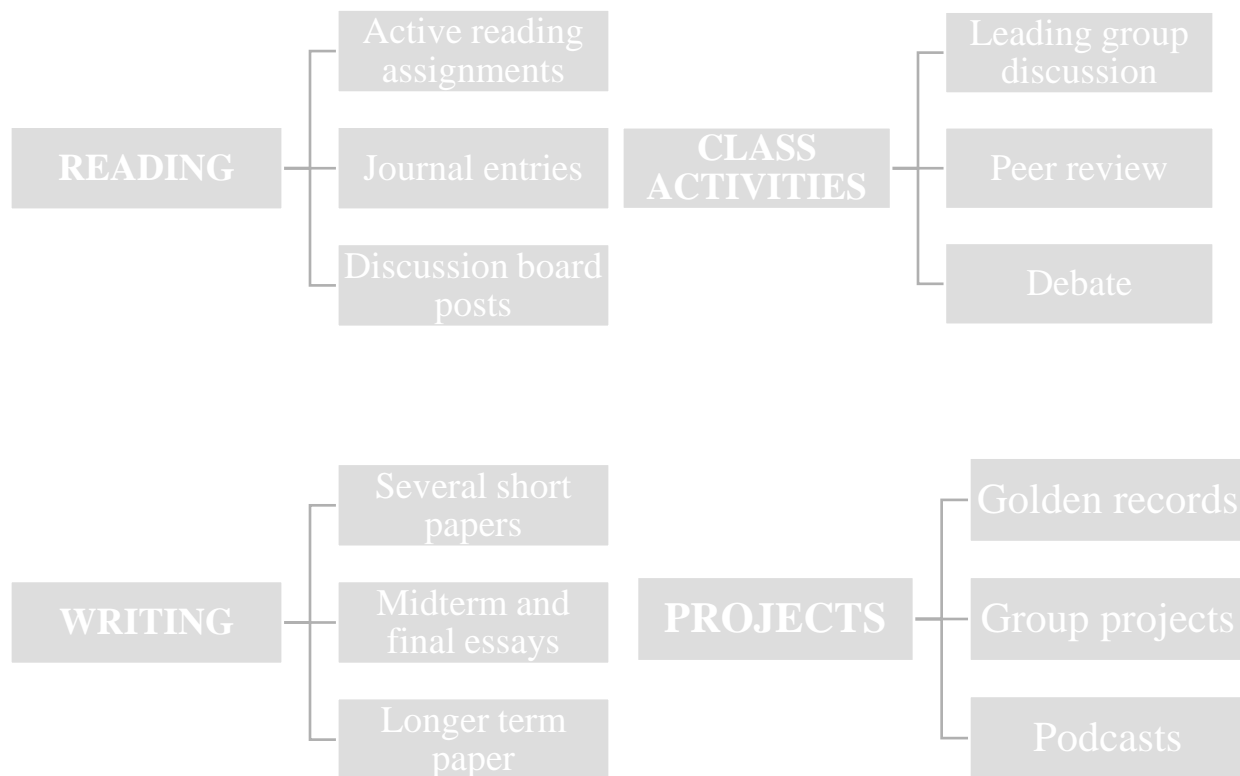
This course may be a bit different than others you have taken. We are going to try an experiment in *student-centered learning*. You and your classmates will have substantive opportunities to shape the nature of this course. Through a series of “class councils” at the beginning of the semester, we will decide key course elements like learning goals, the nature of course assignments and evaluation, course content and media, as well as how to run class time – all by mutual deliberation. We will also consider together whether and how we might want to involve other people or places in our course, e.g. by inviting guest speakers, making excursions out of the classroom, or involving community partners in some way. Throughout the semester we will also reflect on what is working for us and what is not, and make changes as appropriate. The aims of this approach are to empower you in your education and provide you with valuable opportunities to actively pursue lines of inquiry that genuinely interest you. It should be both challenging and fun!

How Do You Think About Learning?

<i>Student-centered learning</i>	<i>Teacher-centered learning</i>
How could I make this a fun challenge?	Is it required?
Are my study habits really helping me learn?	Will this be on a test?
What are some ways that this material relates to my own life?	How will this affect my grade?
What could I do to grow in this context?	What is the least amount of work I can do to pass this class?
Where do I want to take this?	Just tell me the answer!!
<<your example here>>	<<your example here>>

Possible Assessments

What sort of assessments would serve our learning goals for this course?



Course Schedule

Date	Media	In Class
T 9/3	https://voyager.jpl.nasa.gov/golden-record/ https://soundcloud.com/nasa/sets/golden-record-greetings-to-the https://soundcloud.com/nasa/sets/golden-record-sounds-of https://apps.sciencefriday.com/golden-record/	Introductions, the golden records, and our core course questions
H 9/5	Kraft, Robert G. "Bike Riding and the Art of Learning." <i>Change</i> 10, 6 (1978): 36-42. Wright, Gloria Brown. "Student-Centered Learning in Higher Education." <i>International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education</i> 23, 3 (2011): 92-97.	Discussion: student-centered learning Philosophy of Nature concept map
T 9/10	<u>Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature" In <i>Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature</i>, edited by William Cronon, 69-90. New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1995.</u>	Class council: course goals
H 9/12	Sloterdijk, Peter. "The Anthropocene: A Process-State at the Edge of Geohistory?" translated by Anna-Sophie Springer In <i>Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies</i> , edited by Davis, Heather and Etienne Turpin, 327-340. London: Open Humanities Press, 2015.	Class council: course activities and assessment
T 9/17	Kragh, Helge S. "New Horizons" In <i>Conceptions of the Cosmos: From Myths to the Accelerating Universe: A History of Cosmology</i> , 221-252.	Class council: course media

Date	Media	In Class
	Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.	
H 9/19	Snyder, Gary. "Good, Wild, Sacred." In <i>The Practice of the Wild</i> , 78-96. New York: North Point Press, 1990.	Class council: extra-classroom elements
T 9/24		
H 9/26		
T 10/1		
H 10/3		
T 10/8		
H 10/10		
T 10/15		
H 10/17		
T 10/22		
H 10/24		
MID-SEMESTER GRADES DUE		
T 10/12		Midterm check-in discussion
H 10/31		Class council: modifications going forward
T 11/5		
H 11/7		
T 11/12		
H 11/14		
T 11/19		
H 11/21		
T 11/26		
THANKSGIVING BREAK		
T 12/3		
H 12/5		Reflection day

Accommodation and Special Needs

I am committed to working with students with disabilities and special needs to make sure everyone gets the most out of the course and is assessed fairly. Students with disabilities or special needs should contact the Office of Accessibility at the beginning of the semester so proper accommodations can be made. More information about the Office of Accessibility can be found at:

<https://community.siena.edu/student-life/departments/office-of-accessibility/>

Diversity and Inclusivity

In this course, I will do my best to ensure that students from all backgrounds and perspectives will be served equitably. The diversity that students bring to this class will be viewed as a resource, strength, and a benefit. Welcoming diversity and cultivating an inclusive class climate is partly your responsibility too. We will have plenty of opportunity to practice respectfully listening and responding to one another. In class discussion please:

- Contribute by listening and speaking when appropriate
- Do not interrupt others
- Do not monopolize class airtime
- Avoid Ad Hominem responses
- Charitably interpret others
- Think before you speak
- Always be respectful, especially when you disagree or do not understand
- Apologize if you make a mistake
- Practice compassion and forgiveness

Your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity, inclusivity, and respect in this course are encouraged and appreciated—please reach out.

Academic Integrity

I have a *zero-tolerance* policy on plagiarism. In this course, students and the professor will respect Siena College's policies on academic integrity, which can be found at:

<https://community.siena.edu/academic-affairs/resources/academic-integrity/> It is your responsibility to understand and refrain from cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. If you have *any questions* about what constitutes a failure of academic integrity, please ask me.