

## Fall 2021 Critical Conversations Syllabus

**Meeting 1: What is happening to the earth, the sky, and the oceans? How do we know, and what can we do? How can writers and artists help us to think about these crises?**

Readings:

Lydia Millet, "Good Grief"

David Wallace Wells, "This Uninhabitable Earth"

Jennifer Wenzel, selections from the introduction to *The Disposition of Nature*, pp. 1–2 and 15–21

**Meeting 2: Short stories about running out of gas, the end of oil, the end of the world, and how the world of fossil fuels may have other futures in mind:**

Readings:

Italo Calvino, "The Petrol Pump"

China Mieville, "Covehithe"

Henrietta Rose-Innes, "Poison"

**Meeting 3: Non-fiction essays that contemplate what the climate crisis and the Coronavirus pandemic means for our daily lives, for the places and people we love, and for our beliefs about what makes a good or ethical life:**

Readings:

Stephanie LeMenager, "Notes on a Civics for the Sixth Extinction"

Arundhati Roy, "Pandemic as Portal"

Zadie Smith, "Elegy for a Country's Seasons"

Jennifer Wenzel, "Along the Fold"