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OCTOBER 20, 2015 | 175-15

Audra Mitchell appointed Laurier's new CIGI Chair in Global Governance and Ethics

WATERLOO – Is the pygmy hippo more worthy of protection from extinction than the blobfish or the hoodia cactus? And what about humans, who face existential threats from a variety of sources? How can and might humans living in diverse ecological-cultural contexts respond to mass extinction and other potentially world-threatening events?

Wilfrid Laurier University's new Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) Chair in Global Governance and Ethics Audra L. Mitchell explores answers to these questions and more.

Mitchell's research seeks to transform global ethics to respond to emerging ecological and/or technological challenges, including mass extinction, geo-engineering and space colonization. Her research agenda calls on people to rethink global governance in light of human intervention into planetary processes.

Mitchell's academic background is rooted in diverse disciplines including international studies, anthropology, philosophy, geography, and science and technology studies.

"We need to radically re-think the basic assumptions, frameworks and concepts of global ethics if we are to face up to emerging challenges such as mass extinction, geo-engineering and space colonization," said Mitchell. "Here in Canada, and in Waterloo, we have a unique opportunity to respond to these issues by drawing on a concentration of expertise in a wide range of areas such as science and technology, ecological politics and indigenous worldviews. My research works across areas like these to generate innovative, pluralistic responses to world-altering challenges."

"Dr. Mitchell's work responds to emerging issues of our time – how society finds ethical solutions to large-scale, international problems," said Deborah MacLatchy, vice-president: academic and provost and acting vice-president: Research. "We are extremely pleased she is joining the robust group of researchers and graduate students at Laurier and the Balsillie School of International Affairs who are exploring these issues."

Mitchell received her PhD from Queen's University Belfast, UK. Prior to joining Laurier and the Balsillie School of International Affairs, she was a Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of York (2010-15), UK and a postdoctoral fellow at the University of St. Andrews (2009-10).

[Find more information on Audra Mitchell's research.](#)