

LIT 422
Ecocritical Theory & Practice
Fall 2017

LA 105
T&Th 9:30-10:50

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Office Hours:
T/W/Th 11-12
and by appt.

"Must literature always lead us away from the physical world, never back to it?"
--Lawrence Buell

Course Description

LIT 402 Ecocritical Theory & Practice introduces students to Ecocriticism as a multidisciplinary inquiry into the relationships between literature and nature, language and our experience of and within more-than-human environments.

Topics include: Nature under the signs of Romanticism, Modernism, and Postmodernism, the nature of phenomenology, social construction of nature, ecofeminism, urban ecocriticism, queer nature, posthumanism, and the nature of the Anthropocene.

Course Goals

Students in LIT 422 will demonstrate through class discussion and written analysis

- familiarity with key Ecocritical perspectives and methodologies
- familiarity with the critical vocabularies associated with these perspectives and methodologies
- an ability to apply productively Ecocritical perspectives and methodologies in close reading of texts

LIT 422 Requirements

- Regular class attendance and participation, steady preparation
- Three Critical Essays
- Ecocritical Principles and Methods Project
- A portfolio of your written work

Ecocritical Principles and Methods Project

For each ecocritical approach, I would like you to prepare a succinct summary of the specific principles and methods at work. At term's end you will compile and revise these summaries. Please follow the guidelines I will give you.

Graduate Students

Graduate students will be invited to read beyond the syllabus and to develop, in consultation with Gilcrest, an Applied Ecocriticism Project due at term's end.

Grading (Undergraduate)

Essay #1	25%	
Essay #2	25%	
Essay #3	25%	
Ecocritical Principles and Methods Project		25%

Grading (Graduate)

Essay #1	20%	
Essay #2	20%	
Essay #3	20%	
Ecocritical Principles and Methods Project		20%
Applied Ecocriticism Project	20%	

Course Policies and Procedures, and Unsolicited Advice

- Students who fail to attend the first two classes of the term will be dropped.
- Attendance and Participation: Because I believe you can learn the material covered in this course only by being here, your attendance and **ACTIVE** participation are required. Your final grade will be dropped one full letter grade after **4** unexcused absences; a failing grade will be assigned after **five** unexcused absences. (An **excused** absence requires a **pre-arranged** scholastic or athletic commitment or a **bona fide and substantiated** medical emergency.)
- If you miss a class, **please make arrangements with a colleague to get notes**. Also, **please check with me to see if you missed any handouts** or special instructions. (All handouts will be posted to Moodle, eventually.)
- Laptops and tablets may be used for note taking; **laptops and tablets (and cellphones) used for other purposes will be confiscated and given to wayward children**.
- Texts: The texts under consideration are central to our work in this class, especially during class time. You **MUST** purchase the texts for this class **and you MUST bring the relevant texts to class**. No exceptions, no excuses.
- Deadlines: All work is due in class on the assigned date. **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED**.
- Presentation: Essays must be printed. Black ink. 10 or 12 pt. font. Either Cambria or Times New Roman, e.g., is sufficient. Please, no funky fonts. I would like you to follow the MLA citation and documentation guidelines in

- this class. Make sure you include on your work your name, the title and draft number, this class and section number, my name, and the date.
- Revision: Because true revision is an essential part of serious writing, **you are invited to revise your first two essays, as necessary**. A final grade will only be recorded after I receive, and evaluate, your revision. Please follow the **Guidelines for Revision** that I will give you.
 - Please make hard copies of all your work and keep them in a safe place.
 - I do not accept work in electronic form. Recycled paper saves trees. Printing on two sides is usually fine.
 - The instructor and the University reserve the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus (course requirements, grading policy, etc.) as needed.

Scholarship

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrase) must be properly documented. Students who plagiarize face serious consequences that may range from receiving a failing grade on a given assignment to failing the course. Students who plagiarize also face additional University sanctions.

Accommodations

If you have a disability (physical or learning) that you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can discuss whatever accommodations may be necessary.

Required Texts

Ecocriticism: The Essential Reader. Ed. Ken Hiltner

Many required texts will be posted to our Moodle site. Please budget adequate \$\$ if you prefer to print these documents.

Also, a two-pocket folder for your portfolio

Suggested Texts

Interested students, and especially graduate students, should consider purchasing *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism* (ed. Laurence Coupe)—many of our additional texts (which I will make available on Moodle) come from this text. Also, interested students should consider purchasing *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (eds. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm)—the first anthology of ecocriticism.

Syllabus

(M) = text available via Moodle

- Th 8/31 Overview: Theory and Perspective
- Tu 9/5 Disciplinary History: Glotfelty (120-130); Heise (164-177)
Th 9/7 Writing "Nature": Soper (267-277); Soper (M); Gifford (M)
- Tu 9/12 Writing "Nature": Buell (97-101); Rigby (357-367); Manes (M)
Th 9/14 Roots: White (39-46); from the Biblical Tradition (M); Berry (M)
- Tu 9/19 Romanticism/Pastoral: Williams (35-38); Wordsworth (M);
Gifford (M); Garrard (M)
- Th 9/21 No Class
- Tu 9/26 Romanticism/Sublime: Emerson (M); Thoreau (M); Hitt (M)
Th 9/28 Modernism: Lawrence (M); Leavis & Thompson (M); Adorno &
Horkheimer (M)
- Tu 10/3 Excursion 1: Dillard (M)
Th 10/5 Cross-cultural Perspectives: Snyder (70-76); Snyder (M); Silko (M)
Essay #1 DUE
- Tu 10/10 Wilderness: Thoreau (M); Turner (M); Snyder (M)
Th 10/12 Wilderness: Cronon (102-119); Casey (M)
- Tu 10/17 Urban Ecology: Bennett & Teague (M); Wallace (M)
Th 10/19 Deep Ecology: Naess (47-61); Janik (M)
- Tu 10/24 Phenomenology: Abram (M)
Th 10/26 Phenomenology: Abram (M); Cantrell (M)
- Tu 10/31 Ecofeminism: de Beauvoir (M); Merchant (10-34); Kolodny (M)
Th 11/2 Ecofeminism: Westling (M); Alaimo & Hekman (143-153); Le Guin
(353-356)
- Tu 11/7 Queer: Haraway (M); Mortimer-Sandilands & Erickson (159-163)
Th 11/9 Queer: Sturgeon (M); Stein (M)
- Tu 11/14 Trans/Posthumanism: Haraway (M)
Th 11/16 Excursion 2: Maclean (M)
- Tu 11/21 Postcolonial: Huggan & Tiffin (178-195); Nixon (196-210)
- Thanksgiving Holiday

Tu 11/28 Postcolonial: Tsing (211-231); Tobin (310-321)
Th 11/30 Environmental Justice: Adams, Evans & Stein (135-142); Bullard
(154-158)

Tu 12/5 Environmental Justice: Reed **(M)**; Evans **(M)**
Th 12/7 Dark Ecology: Kingsnorth **(M)**; Calvert **(M)**

Tu 12/12 Dark Ecology: Morton **(M)**; Chakrabarty (335-352); Evaluations

M 12/18 Completed Portfolio DUE no later than NOON