

Course discipline/number/title: ENGL 2284: Literature and the Environment

A. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

1. Credits: 3
2. Hours/Week: 3
3. Prerequisites (Course discipline/number): None
4. Other requirements: College-level reading and writing recommended
5. MnTC Goals (if any): Goal 6/The Humanities-the Arts, Literature, and Philosophy, Goal 10/People and the Environment

B. COURSE DESCRIPTION: Students will read and examine a number of primary texts in order to explore answers to a key question -- How shall we live? In order to develop an appreciation of environmental literacy, students will be introduced to a wide variety of texts that have influenced our understanding of the natural world. Field trips and/or service-learning projects may be part of the course. College-level reading and writing recommended.

C. DATE LAST REVISED (Month, year): May 2019

D. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS:

1. Representations of human relationships with the environment in the arts—mainly literature, but also film, art, music
2. A history of nature in literature, including the basis for the environmental movement
3. Traditional wisdom of indigenous peoples and the cultural role of storytelling
4. Contemporary nature writing
5. Theories of nature and human/nature relationships such as deep ecology and ecofeminism

E. LEARNING OUTCOMES (GENERAL): The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate awareness of the vast scope of literary works that illustrate human connections to the biophysical world.
2. Respond critically to works of environmental literature.
3. Evaluate how authors propose we solve environmental and natural resource challenges.
4. Construct a personal environmental ethic informed by the literary works read for the course.

F. LEARNING OUTCOMES (MNTC):

Goal 6/The Humanities-the Arts, Literature, and Philosophy: The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within a historical and social context.
3. Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
4. Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.

Goal 10/People and the Environment: The student will be able to:

1. Explain the basic structure and function of various natural ecosystems and of human adaptive strategies within those systems.
2. Discern patterns and interrelationships of biophysical and socio-cultural systems.
3. Describe the basic institutional arrangements (social, legal, political, economic, religious) that are evolving to deal with environmental and natural resource challenges.
4. Evaluate critically environmental and natural resource issues in light of understandings about interrelationships, ecosystems, and institutions.

G. METHODS FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING: Methods may include but are not limited to:

1. Objective exams
2. Essay exams
3. Research papers/projects
4. Short interpretive essays
5. Small group discussions/projects/presentations



- H. RCTC CORE OUTCOME(S). This course contributes to meeting the following RCTC Core Outcome(s):  
Critical Thinking. Students will think systematically and explore information thoroughly before accepting or formulating a position or conclusion.
- I. SPECIAL INFORMATION (if any): None