

ENGL 338: Environmental Criticism
Professor Cari Carpenter
Fall 2022
TR 11:30-12:45
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(and by appt.)
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Office Hours Via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/92095171825?pwd=VFFneW1sTkZCNkp6aDIJUUVITWZqQT09>

Meeting ID: 920 9517 1825

Passcode: WbGiF2

Environmental Criticism

Over the course of the semester, we will read works of literature conversant with popular ecocritical methodologies (such as ecofeminism, queer ecology, and Indigenous ecocriticism) and their corresponding terms. Our goals are (1) to investigate what environmental criticism is and does, and (2) to discover the complications and joys that arrive when we theorize how, for example, physical bodies of water—from a drop to an ocean, by flood and by drought—affect the imagination. We will pay particular attention to how the genres of the ecogothic and climate-fiction represent the environment, how Indigenous understandings contribute to environmental studies, and the relationship between literature and the earth. Overall, you will understand how literature theorizes ecology as much as ecological theory informs literature, thereby revealing literature's potential to reshape, and even redress, contemporary issues of environmental justice.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of the quarter, I hope you will demonstrate:

- A heightened familiarity with the influential literature and history of this period;
- A sharpened ability to compare, contrast, and draw connections between literary texts;
- Enhanced close reading and writing skills.

COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS

The following texts are available at the WVU Bookstore:

Adamson, Gleason, and Pellow, *Keywords for Environmental Studies*
Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior*
Dimoline, *Marrow Thieves*
Butler, *The Parable of the Sower*

REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Attendance and Participation** (15% of final grade)
- 2. Your participation grade will be based on the following:**

●**Your overall engagement in our discussions and writing activities.** We don't often think of listening as an element of participation, but a productive learning environment is characterized by participants who hear and respect others' words even if they don't agree with them. I welcome debate that is balanced with mutual respect.

●**Your completion of assigned readings before class.** Our discussions and writing assignments require your familiarity and engagement with these readings. If you aren't prepared, you do a disservice to yourself and to the other students. Since certain readings will be sent to you online, you need to check your email account frequently. Make sure I have your current email address.

More than five absences will result in a lower grade (unless absence is due to quarantine, military service, or a recognized University event/holiday. See Covid policy below).

3. Reading Response (25% of final grade)

Twelve days this semester, beginning the second week of class, you will be responsible for writing a reading response to certain questions (and anything you want to add). This needs to be at least one page and will be due Thursday at the beginning of class. You are allowed to miss two reading responses over the course of the semester.

Evaluation of reading response: Each will be worth up to 10 points. These will be evaluated by their specificity, clarity, and engagement with the class material. Pay attention to the literary details of the piece (eg word choice, symbolism, line structure for poetry, etc.).

4. ESSAY ONE (15% of final grade)

Description of this and the following assignments is forthcoming.

5. ESSAY TWO (20% of final grade)

6. FINAL EXAM (25% of final grade)

Extra credit opportunity

I will post a page on eCampus for class notes. You will get extra credit if you place notes there within one day of any class. Please include your name and the date.

1-4 days of notes: 1 point of final grade

5-10 days of notes: 2 points of final grade

11-15 days of notes: 3 points of final grade

CLASS POLICIES

Covid

We are in the middle of a complex, rapidly changing event that might require small or significant changes in the syllabus or class procedures. My first concern is of course health and safety, so I will defer to medical officials in making decisions about the class. If you (or a close friend or family member) happen to fall ill with Covid, be sure to notify your professors; we can then make a plan with you for classwork. **Please make sure I have the email address you check frequently and stay in constant contact with me throughout the semester.** We will get through this!

WVU Covid Statement

“Throughout the summer, we have closely monitored data related to COVID-19, including the highly infectious BA.5 Omicron subvariant,” said g, associate dean for clinical affairs and professor of infectious diseases in the School of Medicine. “With so many individuals now using rapid home antigen testing for diagnosis, case counts have become a less reliable indicator of disease spread. However, we can say with confidence that we have not seen any sustained significant increase in severe outcomes associated with COVID-19 in West Virginia. Fatalities and cases requiring ventilator care have remained low and relatively stable throughout the summer. “We are using the tools and knowledge we've gained throughout the pandemic as our guide, and each of us is now in a better position to make individual decisions about how to protect ourselves and others,” Sarwari added.

WVU strongly encourages, but does not require, everyone to stay optimally protected against COVID-19 by getting their primary vaccine series and staying up-to-date with a booster dose if they are eligible to receive one.

WVU will not require testing prior to attendance on campus; however, students and employees are encouraged to take advantage of self-antigen testing or community testing opportunities before and during the semester.

Any student living in a residence hall who tests positive for COVID-19 must notify WVU Shared Services via email at careservices@mail.wvu.edu or call 304-293-6006 to initiate a process to move the student into isolation housing provided at Lyon Tower. The University will provide access to transportation and meals for those in campus isolation. Residence hall students may also choose to isolate off campus.

Masks are not required on WVU campuses but are always welcome. The University will stock dispensers with disposable masks and hand sanitizer.

If a person contracts COVID-19, they must isolate for 5 days and wear a mask for an additional 5 days while in the classroom or other indoor spaces.

The University will continue to monitor public health data and re-evaluate campus guidelines, if necessary.

Updated WVU Attendance Policy: Students who are ill or quarantined (self-imposed or institutionally imposed) cannot be punished academically. This means that they cannot lose points. Students will be given the opportunity to make up any missed assignments or tests, although they may receive an alternative assignment. The major difference between sick and quarantined students is that we expect quarantined students to be working through their material online while they are in quarantine. Sick students will clearly have to make material up once they return to health.

If a student becomes ill (or injured or experiences any other unfortunate event that removes them from class for an extended period), they can use the **emergency leave policy** to work through the best possible resolution. It works similarly to the military leave policy. While it does not guarantee

a particular outcome, it does provide the student a measure of protection. Documentation of some sort may be requested depending upon the resolution.

Punctual attendance is required. Tardiness or poor attendance will adversely affect your final grade (**more than five unexcused absences will result in a zero for attendance and participation (unless absence is due to quarantine, military service, or a recognized University event/holiday. See Covid policy above).** Please make every effort to arrive to class on time; important announcements will often be made in the first few minutes of class. Our Discussion Board conversations and writing assignments require your familiarity with these readings. If you don't come prepared, you do a disservice to yourself and to the other students. We don't often think of listening as an element of participation, but a productive learning environment is characterized by participants who respect others' words even if they don't agree with them. Think of the Discussion Board as a place to prove your engagement with the texts, ideas, and your peer's responses to them.

Late work is not acceptable. Any assignment handed in after the class period in which it is due will be penalized for lateness (**reduced 1/2 letter grade each day it is late, including the day it is due**). If a personal emergency arises and you need an extension, speak to me as soon as possible about your situation. Please plan ahead for computer mishaps: always keep a back-up file of your work, and give yourself plenty of time to print. This does not apply to the Discussion Board posts; they are not accepted late.

Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Your classmates and instructor deserve your respect and support just as you deserve theirs.

Academic Integrity Statement

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, instructors will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of their courses. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the WVU Academic Standards Policy (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecreditstermsclassification>). Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see your instructor before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Plagiarism, a form of theft, is prohibited. Plagiarism is defined as the submission of work that contains ideas not fully your own: ideas taken from publications, other students, your professors, the Internet, etc. Remember that you are required to cite a source if you include a direct quotation or if you borrow an idea and put it in your own words. If you have questions about the fine line between being influenced by a text or person and plagiarizing its/his/her ideas, cite the source. For a more detailed description of plagiarism, as well as the correct form for citation of sources, see a writing handbook or ask me. **The consequences of a proven case of plagiarism may result in an "F" in the course.**

Sexual Misconduct Statement

West Virginia University does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence [BOG Rule 1.6]. It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff; keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. (<https://titleix.wvu.edu/staff>)

If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the Carruth Center, **304-293-9355** or **304-293-4431** (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center (RDVIC), **304-292-5100** or **304-292-4431** (24-hour hotline).

For more information, please consult WVU's Title IX Office (<https://titleix.wvu.edu/resources-offices>).

Mental Health

Mental health concerns or stressful events can adversely affect your academic performance and social relationships. WVU offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns that you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at the Carruth Center for Psychological and Psychiatric Services (CCPPS) website: <https://carruth.wvu.edu/>

If you are in need of crisis services, call the CCPPS main number 24/7: (304) 293-4431.

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. In accordance with that commitment I maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and nondiscrimination. WVU does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, disability, age, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestion as how to promote such a positive and open environment in this class is appreciated and given serious attention.

Inclusivity Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open *communication, mutual respect, and inclusion*. *If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in your classes, please advise your instructors and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services:* (<https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>). More information is available at the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (<https://diversity.wvu.edu/>). [adopted 2-11-2013]

SCHEDULE

Each piece should be read by the date on which it is listed. This schedule is subject to change.

K=Keywords anthology

E=available on eCampus

Week One

R Aug. 18: Introduction

Introduction: Ecocriticism

Week Two

Futures of Ecocriticism: Second-Wave Ecocriticism

T Aug. 23: Garrard, “Ecocriticism” (K); Zalasiewicz, “Anthropocene” (K); Thoreau, except from *Walden*: “The Pond in Winter”-“Spring” (www.gutenberg.org/files/205/205-h/205-h.htm); Hohn, “Everybody Hates Henry” (<https://newrepublic.com/article/123162/everybody-hates-henry-david-thoreau>); Casteel, “Pastoral” (K)

R Aug. 25: Kern, “Ecocriticism: What Is It Good For?” (E); Excerpt from Whitman, “Song of Myself” (<http://depts.washington.edu/lsearlec/TEXTS/WHITMAN/SONGSELF.HTM> (lines 1-388)); Stevens, “Anecdote to a Jar” (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/14575/anecdote-of-the-jar>); Castree, “Nature” (K)

Week Three

Problems with Ecology

T Aug. 30: Dietering, “The Postnatural Novel” (E); Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness” {<https://faculty.washington.edu/timbillo/Readings%20and%20documents/Wilderness/Cronon%20The%20trouble%20with%20Wilderness.pdf>}; Carson, “A Fable for Tomorrow” (E); Excerpt from Ammons, *Garbage* (E)

Feminist Ecologies

R Sept. 1: Plumwood, “Feminism and Ecofeminism” (E); Jewett, “A White Heron” (<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/a-white-heron-by-sarah-orne-jewett/4550854.html>)

Week Four

T Sept. 6: Gaard, “Ecofeminism” (E); Oliver, “Some Questions You Might Ask”; “The Summer Day” (<http://ruthie822.blogspot.com/search?q=oliver>); “White Night” (White Night - Poem by Mary Oliver (famouspoetsandpoems.com))

Queer Ecology

R Sept. 8: Sandilands, “Queer Ecology” (K); Sandilands, Catriona. “Unnatural Passions? Notes Towards a Queer Ecology” (E); Gaard, “Toward a Queer Ecofeminism” {https://www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/Issue_9/issue9_sandilands.pdf}; *Goodbye Gauley Mountain* (film available on www.amazon.com and on hold in WVU library)

Week Five

Indigenous Ecologies

T Sept 13: Latour (<http://www.bruno-latour.fr/node/487> Listen 5:30-59; Todd, “An Indigenous Feminist's Take On The Ontological Turn: ‘Ontology’ Is Just Another Word For Colonialism” (<https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12124>); Cariou, “Athabasca Story” (<https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.uoregon.edu/dist/6/10008/files/2015/01/An-Athabasca-Story-Cariou-1g7owhy.pdf>)

R Sept. 15: Allen, “A Sacred Hoop” (E); Silko, “Cottonwood” (E); Momaday, “A First American Views the Land” (E); Long Soldier, “Women and Standing Rock” (<https://orionmagazine.org/article/women-standing-rock/>)

Week Six

T Sept. 20: “Native American Legends” (<http://www.native-languages.org/windigo.htm>); Murphy, “Going ‘Windigo’” (E); Erdrich, “Windigo” (poetryfoundation.org/poems/43086/windigo)

Ecogothic

R Sept. 22: Carroll and Lawson, “New Media, Activism, and Indigenous Environmental Governance: Politics and the Minnesota-Wisconsin Wolf Hunt” (E); Janet Fiskio, “Dancing at the End of the World: The Poetics of the Body in Indigenous Protest” (E)

Week Seven

Ecogothic

T Sept. 27: Keetley and Silvis, “Approaches to the Ecogothic” (E); Chesnutt, “Po’ Sandy” (<https://chesnuttarchive.org/Works/Stories/sandy.html>); Spofford, “Circumstance” (<https://www.bartleby.com/400/prose/1889.html>)

R Sept. 29: Stowe, excerpt from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Chapter 7 (<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/203/203-h/203-h.htm>), Carpenter, “Bleeding Feet and Failing Knees: The Ecogothic in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and *Chasing Ice*” (E); *Chasing Ice* (film available at <http://www.documentarymania.com/player.php?title=Chasing%20Ice> and on hold in WVU library)

ESSAY ONE DUE

Week Eight

Climate Change

T Oct. 4: Ross, “Climate Change” (K); Iovino, “Pollution” (K); Atwood, “Time Capsule Found on the Dead Planet” (<https://www.theguardian.com/b>); Harris, “A is for Acid, B is for Bee” (E)

R Oct. 6: Bendell, “Deep Adaptation” (E); Khullar, “Annals of a Warming Planet” (E)

Week Nine

Cli-Fi

T Oct. 11: *Flight Behavior* (Chapters 1-3)

R Oct. 13: *Flight Behavior* (chapters 4-6)

Week Ten

T Oct 18: *Flight Behavior* (chapters 7-9)

Oct. 20: NO CLASS

Week Eleven

T Oct. 25: *Flight Behavior* (chapters 10-13)

R Oct. 27: *Flight Behavior* (to end)

ESSAY 2 DUE

Week Twelve

T Nov.1: *Marrow Thieves* (epigraph-chapter 9)

R Nov. 3: *Marrow Thieves* (chapters 10-19)

Week Thirteen

T Nov. 8: NO CLASS (Voting Day)

R Nov. 10: *Marrow Thieves* (to end)

Week Fourteen

T Nov. 15: *Parable of the Sower* (chapters 1-4)

R Nov. 17: *Parable of the Sower* (chapters 5-10)

Thanksgiving Break (Nov. 19-27)

Week Fifteen

T Nov. 29: *Parable of the Sower* (chapters 11-15)

R Dec. 1: *Parable of the Sower* (Chapters 16-20)

Week Sixteen

T Dec. 6: *Parable of the Sower* (to end)

R Dec. 8: Last Day of Class: Presentations

Final: due to eCampus by Thursday, Dec. 15 by 10 a.m.

Optional Readings (E=available upon request)

Buell, "The Emergence of Environmental Criticism" (E)

Buell, "Toxic Discourse" (E)

Cagel, "After Water" {<https://longreads.com/2015/06/02/after-water/>}

Grusin, *Thoreau, Economy, and the Extravagance of Nature*

Haraway, "Camille Stories" (E)

Jeffers, "Purse-Seine" (E)

Kohn, *How Forests Think*

Latour, various excerpts

Morton, "Quake in Being" (E)

Rusin, "Thoreau, Extravagance, and the Economy of Nature" (E)

Shukin, *Animal Capital* (excerpts) (E)

Tsing, *Arts of Living on an Endangered Planet* (excerpt) (E)

Tsimg, "Empire's Savage Heart"

Weinstock, "Scare Tactics"

"The Uninhabitable Earth" (When Will Climate Change Make the Earth Too Hot For Humans? (nymag.com)

Verchick, "Feminist Theory"

Ziser, "Walden and the Georgic Mode"

Solarpunk: Ecological and Fantastic Stories in a Sustainable World (2012);

Sunvault: Stories of Solarpunk and Eco-Speculation (2017) and *Glass and Gardens* (2018)

