

ELA 1000 (Section 03)
Images of Nature (6cr.)
Fall 2006
Ackley 108
Monday 2:30-5:30
Tuesday/Thursday 9:30 to 10:45

Instructor

Greg Brown Office: Moses 160
Phone: 287-8330
Email: browng@greenmtn.edu
Office hours: TBA

Teaching Assistant

Nichole Ainsworth
Phone: 287-8734
Email: ainsworthn@greenmtn.edu

Course Overview: This course explores the different ways human societies think about and relate to the natural world and the concept of place. Students read from a broad collection that ranges from folklore, poetry, and fiction to environmental philosophy and natural science. Through class discussion and opportunities for extensive writing, students develop a sense of how nature has been perceived and affected by society.

Course Goals: Images of Nature was designed by Green Mountain College to give every incoming student a fundamental experience in environmental literature, writing, and self-expression. As an Environmental Liberal Arts College, Green Mountain strives to provide students with a background in environmental thought (what's out there already) and the skills to express new ideas (what's in you, and needs to get out). To that end, this course strives to provide you with:

- Familiarity with several leading environmental writers and selections of their work.
- Different manners and styles of relating to the natural environment, and a basis of comparison for those relationship models with your own relationship with nature.
- A variety of methods of expressing both environmental critiques and ideas, through the written word, a spoken presentation, and the thoughtful interaction and conversations with others.

In addition, the faculty has listed the following skills and concepts each student should accomplish in this class. By the end of this class, you should have the following skills:

| WRITING: | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1. The ability to generate ideas for writing analysis of a given topic or subject area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brainstorming • freewriting • evaluating possible ideas • refining ideas to a more sophisticated or specific level • striving for freshness in approach | <p>2. An understanding of the definition and function of each part of the essay structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction • body paragraphs • conclusion • thesis statement • topic sentences • transitions | <p>3. Development strategies for paragraphs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unity in paragraphs • multiple examples • a single, extended example • analogy and other comparisons • appeal to authorities • statistics • definition • others |

| READING: | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1. To be able to replicate the main ideas represented in a piece of writing | 2. To differentiate among theses, supporting ideas and examples | 3. To construct a valid response to a piece of writing | 4. To be able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a piece of writing |

| SPEAKING: | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1. To extrapolate data from varied sources, forming the basis for informed opinion | 2. To be able to clearly articulate and differentiate opinions, facts, and ideas | 3. To be able to listen to the ideas of others | 4. To develop and maintain vocabulary appropriate to the audience |

Content and Structure

The required readings serve as a starting point for a discussion about different issues and ideas concerning a broad range of topics. Students will be expected to do all of the readings prior to the class period in order to effectively contribute to the discussions. Traditional lectures will be few. During most class sessions students will be responsible for leading and directing the discussion. Several writing assignments will be used to evaluate the students' level of understanding of the readings.

This course is divided into four different, but connected segments. The first segment, **Seeing**, concerns how we take notice of and make sense of the natural world. This includes seeing nature through the eyes of a child, through literature, through other cultures, through recreational engagements, and through the lenses used by scientists. These first sensory exposures to nature then give rise to the topic of the second course segment.

In this second segment, **Stories We Tell About Nature**, we'll consider how different people have used nature to tell stories about their histories and their land. We'll further discuss how nature, as setting and place inform our individual and group identities. Our identities are foundational to the assumptions, beliefs, and values we assign to the natural world.

In the third segment of the course, **Who's In Charge Here?** we'll take a closer look at some of these assumptions, beliefs, and values. And here, we'll consider the notion that tensions exist in how we approach natural resource management and environmental ethics based on differing fundamental values and identities.

The natural conclusion to the previous three segments of the course is the promise of direction for the future. **A Land Ethic**, the fourth segment, serves to guide us in making informed and sound decisions regarding the natural world. And decisions regarding the natural world affect not just the health of the environment, but also our own health and well-being. In the end we may come to realize that expressing humans and nature as some dichotomy is an illusion. But for now we'll just recognize that humans do not stand apart from the natural world, rather we are all a part of it.

Course mechanics

Required Texts and Materials

Books

- Barnhill, D. L. (Ed.). (1999). At home on the earth. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- Dillard, A. (1974). Pilgrim at Tinker Creek. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Leopold, A. (1966). A sand county almanac with essays on conservation from Round River. New York: Ballantine Books.
- McPhee, J. (1971). Encounters with the Archdruid. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Thoreau, H. D. (1995). Walden; or, life in the woods. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc. (Original work published 1854)
- Hacker, D. (2003). A Writer's Reference, 5th Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins.

Additional readings will be handed out in class.

Materials

- Orange Field notebook (Available in the bookstore)
- Manila folder (for your Final Portfolio)
- Accordion-style folder (for your Working Portfolio)

Writing Assignments: The several types of assigned writing will include the following:

1: Informal writing. This may be assigned in class or as homework, and will include journal assignments. All informal writing should be completed in your Field Notebook. Informal writings may be shared in class but you need not worry about "mechanics." It is only important that the reader can read your handwriting. Journals will be collected every Tuesday, and should be retrieved every Wednesday morning from my office.

2: Formal response papers (Essay). This type of piece is usually 1-2 pages long, typed and carefully proof-read. There will be approximately one formal response piece assigned each week. Some of these papers will be shared with the class, and the quality of the student's presentation will also factor into the grade

3: Portfolio Essays. Averaging 4-5 pages in length, these source-based essays will bring together the subjects and skills discussed during each of the four segments of the course. These essays must be carefully written, proof read, and often researched and annotated.

4: Discussion Outline. In pairs, you will each lead two discussions based on the reading (listed as "Student-led discussion" in the schedule). The purpose of this exercise is to practice your critical thinking skills and your teaching skills. Each discussion will last between 15 and 30 minutes.

Reading Assignments: You are expected to have read the assignments listed on your syllabus **prior** to each class. To do this to the best of your ability, it may be necessary to read an assignment more than once and/or to take notes in the margins. Taking notes while you're reading will allow you to participate better in class and to analyze a text more critically. Keeping up with the reading assignments is the key to successful participation in this class.

Student Evaluation:

Class work

Participation. Students are expected to attend **every** class. Informal writing, class discussions and in-class projects cannot be replicated (or made up) outside of class. There will even be occasional quizzes. Quiz grades count as part of your participation grade. Student participation in the classroom constitutes 25% of your grade.

Informal writing. Informal writing, including journaling, and your ability to share this writing with the class will constitute 25% of your grade.

Portfolios

Throughout the semester, you will keep *all* of your written work in an accordion folder, including rough drafts, graded papers, peer reviews, and corrections of both formal response papers and extended essays. This **Working Portfolio** will represent the amount of work that you have done for Images of Nature, and an evaluation of the quality and quantity of work you put into the course will account for 25% of your final grade.

You will also revise two pieces of your writing **Final Portfolio** (also known as your ELA Portfolio). You will work with your professor, UTA, and peers to refine these samples of your writing, producing the highest quality of work that you are capable of. These final portfolios will be examined by anonymous readers (faculty from other sections) who will evaluate your work based on a common scale of ten criteria, such as clarity, grammar, punctuation, etc. This final portfolio will account for 25% of your final grade.

Grade Distribution

Participation 25%

Journal 25%

Informal Writing (all writing done in Images) 25%

ELA Portfolio (two 4-5 page source-based essays) 25%

Course and Assignment Policies

- *Fonts, margins, and other details:* While informal writing will occur in your journal, all formal assignments should be typed in a standard font, with 1-inch margins. Response papers should be 1.5 lines spaced; extended essays, including Formal Portfolio essays, should be double-spaced unless otherwise noted.
- *Paper usage:* For ecological reasons, you are encouraged to print out your work on the back of previously used paper whenever possible. Please *do not* use a title page; your name, the instructor's name, the course section, and the date should be typed in the upper left-hand corner of the first page.
- *Late papers:* Late papers and assignments will not be accepted unless you have **prior written permission** from me to turn the paper or assignment in late. I will not accept papers or other materials sent to class with a classmate, when the author is not present unless your absence is directly related to a college activity or a serious, **documented** illness or family emergency. In-class graded assignments (including writing assignments, class projects, and class participation points) cannot be made up. For more information, see the GMC's formal Attendance Policy in the College Catalog.
- *Technical problems:* If your computer or printer malfunctions and "eats" your paper, you must seek a solution from the IT technical support staff, located in Terrace Hall. "Don't tell me, tell IT."
- *Academic Integrity:* To plagiarize is "to steal the language, ideas, or thoughts from another, representing them as one's own original work." Random House Dictionary, Abridged, 1980. If you didn't say it or think it, you must cite the source of the idea. **Any student who submits plagiarized work will receive an F for the entire class.**

Class Schedule

(revised 8/23/06)

| Section 1: SEEING | | | |
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| Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generating ideas for writing • Identifying the main ideas in a text • Listening to the ideas of others • Recognizing common mistakes in grammar and punctuation. | | | |
| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Thursday |
| 1 Aug 28- Aug 31 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising session • Journaling Exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: <i>Heaven and Earth in Jest</i> (Dillard pp. 3-15); Hacker pp. 3-9. • Discussion Demo—Greg and Nicole | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: <i>Seeing</i> (Dillard pp. 16-36) • Homework Due : One-pager |
| 2 Sept 4-7 | Retreat Overnight Trip Location: Lake St. Catherine State Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Excerpts from “Refuge” by Terry Tempest Williams (Audio files) • Student-led Discussion #1 | Recycling Tour 9:45 Reading: July – December (Leopold pp. 3-43) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework Due: One-pager |
| 3 Sept 11-14 | Film: Reason for Hope | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: <i>The Fixed</i> (Dillard pp. 55-72); • Student-led Discussion #2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: <i>The Present</i> (Dillard pp. 78-104); • Student-led Discussion #3 • Homework Due : “One-pager”—What is the relationship between innocence and grasping the present? |
| 4 Sept 18-21 | Trip: Battelle Old-Growth reserve (Middlebury) 1:30-5:30 Plenary Session Jackson Gillman, Storyteller (Gorge 7-8 pm) | Plenary Session Jackson Gillman, Storyteller (Gorge 9:30-10:45 am) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: <i>Fecundity</i> (Dillard pp. 161-183) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: <i>Intricacy</i> (Dillard pp. 124-148) • Student-led Discussion #4 • Homework Due : “One-pager”—What is the relationship between Dillard’s conceptions of intricacy and fecundity? |

Section 2: STORIES WE TELL

Goals:

- Understand each part of an essay’s structure
- Distinguish between thesis and supporting ideas or examples in a text
- Differentiate between opinions, facts, and ideas in conversation and in writing
- Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a reading
- Strengthen and clarify sentences.
- Revising your own writing.

| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Thursday |
|-----------------|--------|--|--|
| 5 Sept 25-28 | TBA | <i>Structure of an essay</i> • Reading: <i>Landscape, History, and the Pueblo Imagination</i> (Barnhill 30-42) • Student-led Discussion #5 | • Reading: <i>Dwellings</i> ; (Barnhill 313-318) • Student-led Discussion #6 Homework Due : One-pager |

| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Thursday |
|----------------|--|--|---|
| 6 Oct 2-5 | • Film: “Save our Land, Save our Towns” • Advising Workshop | <i>Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a reading</i> • Reading: <i>The Gifts of the Deer</i> , (Barnhill 125-147) • Student-led Discussion #7 | Trip: Library (9:30-10:15) MIDTERM PORTFOLIO (Contains Polished Essay # 1) |
| 7 Oct 9-12 | Fall Break | Fall Break | • Reading: <i>Arizona and New Mexico – Manitoba</i> (Leopold pp. 130-173); Hacker pp. 13-17 • Homework Due : “One-pager”—What do you find significant about Leopold’s description of places? • Student-led Discussion #8 |
| 8 Oct 16-19 | Trip: Deane Preserve Trail Work | Plenary Session (Tony Leiserowitz, Images and Stories from Alaska, Ackley Auditorium) <i>Differentiate between opinions, facts, and ideas in conversation and in writing</i> • Reading: Thoreau, 1-13; 26-35 | • Reading: Thoreau, 45-47, 53-64, 193-206. • Student-led Discussion #9 • PORTFOLIOS RETURNED • Activity: In-class reflective writing on the portfolio process |

Section 3: WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Goals:

- Develop strategies for paragraphs
- Summarize and cite examples from a text
- Develop and maintain vocabulary appropriate to conversation with an educated audience
- Using clear transitions
- Revising your own writing

| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Thursday |
|--|---|---|--|
| 9 Oct 23-26 | Trip: Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park • LEAVE GMC AT 1:30, RETURN AT 5:30 | • Reading: <i>A Mountain</i> (McPhee pp. 1-43) • Student-led Discussion #10 | • Reading: <i>A Mountain</i> (McPhee pp. 43-75); Hacker 23-26 • Student-led Discussion #11 • Homework Due : “One-pager”—What is wilderness? |
| 10 Oct 30-Nov 2 | • Film: “Cadillac Desert: | • Reading: <i>An Island</i> (McPhee pp. 77-112) • Student-led Discussion #12 | <i>Summarizing and citing</i> Hacker 318-22 Reading: <i>An Island</i> (McPhee pp. 112-150) • Student-led Discussion #13 • Homework Due : “One-pager”—Can we develop our way to conservation? |
| Registration for Spring 2007 Nov 6-10 | | | |
| 11 Nov 6-9 | Trip: Clark Museum (Massachusetts) | • Reading: <i>A River</i> (McPhee pp. 151-204) • Student-led Discussion #14 | • Reading: <i>A River</i> (McPhee pp. 204-245) • Student-led Discussion #15 • Homework Due : One-pager |

Section 4: THE LAND ETHIC

Goals:

- Constructing valid responses to reading
- Extrapolating data from varied sources in conversation
- Revising your own writing.

| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Thursday |
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| 12 Nov 13-16 | Plenary Session (Peggy Stuhsacker on Wolf Recovery, Ackley Auditorium) | Constructing valid responses to reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings: <i>Thinking Like a Mountain</i>, (Leopold, pp 137-145); <i>Round River</i> (Leopold pp. 188-202); Hacker pp. 318-322. • Student-led Discussion #16 Homework Due; First Draft of Second Source-Based Essay Due (4-5 pages) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading <i>The Land Ethic</i>, (Leopold, pp 237-264) • Student-led Discussion #17 |
| 13 Nov 20-23 | TBA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings: <i>The Place, The Region, and The Commons</i> (Gary Snyder), and <i>The Hudson River Valley: A Bioregional Story</i> (Thomas Berry. (Barnhill, pp 93-110) • Student-led Discussion #18 | Thanksgiving Break |
| 14 Nov 27- Nov 30 | TBA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings: <i>On Willow Creek</i> (Rick Bass); <i>This Place on Earth: Home and the Practice of Permanence</i> (Barnhill, 211-226; 256-265) • Student-led Discussion #19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings: <i>A Sprig of Sage</i> (Terry Tempest Williams); <i>The Rediscovery of Turtle Island</i> (In Barnhill pp. 119-124; pp 297-306) • Student-led Discussion #20 FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE |
| 15 Dec 4-7 | TBA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings: <i>Settling Down</i> (Sanders); <i>Learning to Fail</i> (Masumoto) (Barnhill, pp. 77-92; 191-200) • Student-led Discussion #21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings: <i>Fantasy of a Living Future</i> (Starhawk); <i>The Universe Responds: Or How I Learned We can Have Peace on Earth</i> (Walker) Barnhill, pp. 289-93, 307-312 PORTFOLIOS RETURNED Due: Reflective essay on second portfolio |
| Finals | <p>We will meet on at 8 a.m. Monday, December 12 for a final exercise! Due: Completed, ELA portfolio including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two essays • Portfolio process reflection papers | | |