

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism
PRLS 300 — People with Nature (3)
Spring 2010

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------|
| DAY/TIME: | Thursdays TBD | LOCATION: | Online |
| PROFESSOR: | Dr. Laurie Harmon | EMAIL ADDRESS: | lharmon3@gmu.edu |
| OFFICE LOCATION: | 204 Bull Run Hall | PHONE NUMBER: | 703-993-4565 |
| OFFICE HOURS: | Tuesdays 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. and by appointment | FAX NUMBER: | 703-993-2025 |

PREREQUISITES None

COURSE DESCRIPTION Traces philosophical evolution of perceptions of and attitudes toward nature. Examines role of philosophers, scientists, nature-writers, and artists in the shaping of environmental thought. Includes extensive reading of Emerson, Thoreau, Muir, Leopold, Carson, Wilson, and others.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Identify and articulate the artistic genres/methods influencing perceptions of and attitudes towards nature;
2. Identify and articulate the philosophical, historical, and cultural context within which perceptions of and attitudes towards nature have evolved;
3. Describe how various subgroups of individuals have interacted with nature throughout history;
4. Articulate the various perspectives individuals have expressed toward the natural environment;
5. Verbally and visually illustrate their personal views of the natural environment; and
6. Discuss key events contributing to current views of the natural environment.

Further, upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional accreditation standards:

National Recreation and Park Association Council on Accreditation standards met:

- 7B.03 Understanding the principles and practices of stewardship and use of natural resources and the ability to interpret them to the general public, particularly as related to the public's role in stewardship
- 9B.01 Understanding of the history and development of natural resources recreation policies and their implications for recreation resources management

COURSE OVERVIEW

Since your contributions are such an important part of this course, we'll all be expected to actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class exercises, and fulfill all assignments on time. **Assignments will be due at 9:00 a.m.** on the specified date due. **Assignments received AFTER 9:00 a.m. will be considered late and receive a 20% deduction in points per 24 hour period.** If you have an extreme emergency there may be some exceptions; however, you'll need to discuss these issues with me **prior to the due date** to be considered for exception. I also recommend you make back-up copies of your assignments since computers have been known to crash at the most inopportune moments.

Because we are engaging in an online course, communication is a critical component; therefore, I ask that you check **<http://courses.gmu.edu> regularly for course communications.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect

for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

REQUIRED READINGS

Bryson, B. (1998). *A walk in the woods*. New York: Broadway Books.

Nash, R. F. (1990). *American Environmentalism: Readings in Conservation History*. McGraw-Hill.

LaBastille, A. (1980). *Women and wilderness*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books.

EVALUATION

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points.

| Assignments | Percent of final grade |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Personal Philosophy Project (20 pts) | 20% |
| Class Assignments | |
| Environmental Issue (5 pts) | |
| AT Hike (10 pts) | 30% |
| Volunteering for Nature (5 pts) | |
| Thought Project (10 pts) | |
| Exams (Mid-term [15 pts] and Final [15 pts]) | 30% |
| Class Participation (10 Discussion Boards or online Chats – 2 pts each) | 20% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Grading Scale (percent)

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| A+ = 98 – 100 | B+ = 88 – 89 | C+ = 78 – 79 | D = 60 – 69 |
| A = 94 – 97 | B = 84 – 87 | C = 74 – 77 | F = 0 – 59 |
| A- = 90 – 93 | B- = 80 – 83 | C- = 70 – 73 | |



- ❖ All students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/9798/honorcod.html>]
- ❖ University policy states that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the professor
- ❖ Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the Office of Disability Resources and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu>]
- ❖ For additional School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism information, please visit the website at <http://rht.gmu.edu>.

OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

WRITING CENTER: (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

Fairfax campus – A114 Robinson Hall

Prince William campus – 204 Occoquan Bldg.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: “Ask a Librarian” <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380; <http://caps.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES: The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

“Reading about nature is fine, but if a person walks in the woods and listens carefully, he can learn more than what is in books...” George Washington Carver

“Nature has no mercy at all. Nature says, ‘I’m going to snow. If you have on a bikini and no snowshoes, that’s tough. I am going to snow anyway.’” Maya Angelou

“We need wilderness whether or not we ever set foot in it. We need a refuge even though we may never need to go there. We need the possibility of escape as surely as we need hope.” Edward Abbey

COURSE SCHEDULE REVISED: February 13, 2010

| WEEK (date) | MODULE TOPIC | READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Week 1 (Jan.19 – Jan.22) | Introduction & State of the Environment | Environmental Issues Assign Distributed Chap 1 in WW Chap 1 in Nash |
| Week 2 (Jan.25 – Jan.29) | Philosophical Foundations of American Environmental Thought | Environmental Issues Assign DUE Chap 2 & 4 in WW Chap 3 & 4 in Nash Volunteer Project Distributed |
| Week 3 (Feb.1 – Feb.5) | First Voices for Nature: Painters, Musicians, Poets, Writers, | Thought Project Distributed Chap 17 in WW |
| Week 4 (Feb.8 – Feb.12) | SNOW WEEK | |
| Week 5 (Feb.15 – Feb.19) | Landscape Preservation & the value of parks | Chap 1 & 4 in Bryson Chap 5, 6 & 7 in Nash |
| Week 6 (Feb.22 – Feb.26) | National Parks | Watch National Parks – America’s Best Idea by Ken Burns Chap 11 in Nash |
| Week 7 (Mar.1 – Mar.5) | Preservation as a movement | Chap 7, 10 & 12 in Bryson Chap 13 & 15 in Nash |
| Week 8 (Mar.8 – Mar.12) | SPRING BREAK | |
| Week 9 (Mar.15 – Mar.19) | USDA Forest Service Conservation – is it new? Is it now? | Chap 9 in Nash Chap 3, 13 & 14 in Bryson Volunteer Project DUE AT Assignment Distributed |
| Week 10 (Mar.22 – Mar.26) | Mid-Term EXAM due Thursday, March 25 at 9:00 a.m. Appalachian Trail Hike | Chap 15 & 16 in Bryson |
| Week 11 (Mar.29 – Apr.2) | Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal – Impact on natural resources | Chap 22, 23, 25, 27 & 28 in Nash AT Assignment DUE |
| Week 12 (Apr.5 – Apr.9) | Aldo Leopold & Land Ethic | Chap 30 in Nash Leopold’s Land Ethic (need URL) |
| Week 13 (Apr.12 – Apr.16) | Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring – 1960s Environmental movement | Watch Silent Spring – Available at Mason’s Library |
| Week 14 (Apr.19 – Apr.23) | Environment in the 1970s & 1980s | Chap. 13, 15 & 16 in WW Chap. 34, 35, 36 & 39 in Nash |
| Week 15 (Apr.26 – Apr.30) | Environment in the 1980s (continued) & 1990s | Chap 12 in WW Chap 40, 41, 46 & 47 in Nash |
| Week 16 (May 4 – May 7) | Modern Environmentalism (2000 & beyond...where do we go from here?) | Chap. 18-21 in Bryson Chap.21 & Afterward in WW Chap 49, 59 & 51 in Nash |
| FINAL EXAM WEEK (May 10 – May 12) | Final EXAM due Tuesday, May 11 at 9:00 a.m. | Thought Project DUE |

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary.