

English 230: Introduction to Environmental Literature
Winter 2017
TR 2:00 PM – 3:20 PM, Volcanology 307, CRN 22230

Instructor: Liz Curry

Email: curry2@uoregon.edu

Office phone: 541-346-0531

Office: PLC 241

Office hours: Thursdays 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM and by appointment

Course Overview

This course will introduce students to changing depictions of the environment in 19th, 20th, and 21st century literature. Represented as resplendent landscape, increasingly industrialized space, ecologically compromised habitat, and as chemically altered agricultural swath, the environment and literary consciousness about it change as pressures become increasingly severe. In reading American and European literature, including poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and film, we will track changes in environmental depictions over 200 years. As ideas about nature, ecology, farming, and landscape change, we will also see how earlier legacies of representation remain present. Readings will include works that take us beyond terra firma to see how environments of the air, land, and sea are depicted as active, changing, and vulnerable entities.

English Department Learning Outcomes

The Department's assessment procedure for the Undergraduate English Major is built around six desired learning outcomes:

1. Read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions
2. Draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts
3. Perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts
4. Write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose
5. Employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments
6. Employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis

Required Texts (Available at UO Bookstore)

American Indian Stories and Old Indian Legends, Zitkala-Ša

Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad

Silent Spring, Rachel Carson

The Sixth Extinction, Elizabeth Kolbert

A Small Place, Jamaica Kincaid

Through the Arc of the Rainforest, Karen Tei Yamashita

You will also be provided with a Reading Packet (RP) containing print-outs of all other assigned readings for the course.

Course Expectations and Details

Course Grade

Essay 1: Close Reading	20%
Essay 2: Space/Character Study	20%
In-class engagement	5%
Canvas Posts	25%
Final Project	30%

Proposal (5%) and
Research Paper or Creative Assignment (25%)

Essay 1: Close Reading

You will choose a text and then a short passage or two from that text and write a literary analysis. This means that you will present a critical claim and defend it with the language of the text. You will need to analyze how the language of the piece says “more” than is written on the page. We will practice close reading throughout the term to ensure your familiarity with the practice. Each paper should have a specific thesis statement. This statement should make an original analytic claim about the chosen text, and your paper should support this claim with textual evidence (including quotations) and key terms learned in class.

Essay 2: Space/Character Study

You will choose a character or setting (person, animal, thing, or place) and analyze their initial representation in the text, and then track their development throughout the text. Alternatively, you may choose to look at how a character or space shapes or challenges certain understandings of ‘the environment’ or nature. Then again, you may wish to see how a character is shaped by their environment. Whichever angle you choose, this essay must analyze and investigate how a text unsettles our perception of the environment through character or spatial depictions.

In-Class Engagement

This class emphasizes spoken communication and active listening. Your engaged participation in class is crucial to productive understandings of course readings. For each every class session, you will have an assignment due (whether reading or writing) that prepares you to participate fully in class activities. Keep up with all readings and come to class prepared to ask questions, offer comments, and listen respectfully. **Always bring assigned texts to class.**

Canvas Posts

In addition to in-class participation, you will engage with your classmates through small-group discussion boards on Canvas. These online conversations are meant to deepen and expand our in-class discussions. While they will give you an opportunity to practice your writing skills, these posts are also meant to let you share your thoughts and ideas in an informal space. Your posts will be due by **11pm on Mondays**, and replies to your peers’ posts will be due by **11pm on Wednesdays**. Prompts for posts will be available on Sundays by 9pm.

You will each respond to a prompt and then reply to two peers’ posts. While this online space is meant to be friendly and informal, it is also an extension of our classroom and, as such, it is important that your posts be thoughtful and respectful.

Final Project

In Week 7 you will submit a proposal for your final project (due during Finals Week). You will have the option of writing an extended literary analysis with research or submitting a creative assignment (poetry, short fiction, graphic narrative, visual art, digital project, or other form/mediums are acceptable) and an accompanying artist's statement. The proposal will be worth 5% of your course grade and the final project or essay will be worth 25%.

Course Policies

Registration: The only way to add this class is through DuckWeb. The last day to add this or any English class is the Friday of week one.

Attendance: Attendance is required. You are allowed two absences. Additional absences will each lower your course grade by 1/3 (first additional absence will reduce a B- to a C+).

Formatting Guidelines for Written Work: All written work should be typed and double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font and 1" margins. Always use MLA format for quoting and citing sources.

Late Work: All assigned work is due at the beginning of class. If you must miss class, turn in your work before class that day to receive credit. Late work will drop a full letter grade for each calendar day it is late. **To pass the class, you must turn in all three major assignments.**

Incompletes: Requests for the grade "Incomplete" must be made in advance of the end of the quarter. Such approval will be granted only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed by students through unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

Academic Honesty: All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please consult the *Student Conduct Code* on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website. In cases where academic misconduct has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade will be given. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Academic Resources: I encourage you to attend office hours, e-mail me for an appointment, or visit the University's excellent and free tutors either through the Writing Associates Program or the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC). More information about these services can be found at these two sites: <http://english.uoregon.edu/undergraduate/need-help-with-an-english-essay> or <http://tlc.uoregon.edu>

Writing Associates are available to help students with any aspect of their writing for this course. They are peer tutors who can work with you one-on-one on your writing assignments. They are advanced English majors who have been trained to tutor writing. They can help you understand the process of writing about literature and media and show you how to make your written work for this class more clear, correct, and effective. To make an appointment with a

Writing Associate, go to <http://english.uoregon.edu/writingassociates/>

Access: If you have a disability (physical or learning) which you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can make arrangements, if necessary, for your full access to all classroom activities.

Cell Phone Use: Cell phones are highly disruptive and should not be used in class. The ringer must be turned off before the start of class. You may not text, answer, or make calls in the classroom. Any use of cell phones during class time will result in an automatic absence for the day. I even encourage you to avoid consulting your phone immediately before class, and instead urge you to flip through our text for that day. Or get to know your neighbor.

Personal Computer Use: We will focus closely on reading and discussion. Personal computers are not necessary for note-taking, and should not be used during class time. If you require use of your computer, contact me ahead of time to discuss possible accommodation. .

Mandatory Reporting: The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. Any UO employee who becomes aware that such behavior is occurring must report that information to the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity: (<http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/>).

The University Health Center and University Counseling and Testing Center provide assistance to students in such cases and have a greater ability to work confidentially.

A Note on Grading and Class Expectations: “Introductory” does not mean “easy.” The purpose of this class is to provide an introduction to environmental literature. This means you will not be graded harshly for not having a great breadth or depth of knowledge in the field of environmental literature beyond what we discuss and read together. You will, however, be held to collegiate and English department standards in terms of your in-class participation, your follow-through on syllabus requirements, and your display of course mastery in the structure, argument, and mechanics of your writing. The reading and written work for this course may be heavy at times.

Schedule of Assignments

Week	Date	Reading Due	Writing Due in Class
1	T 1/10	Introductions Syllabus review Survey	Survey
	R 1/12	Keats, "Ode to a Nightingale" Dickenson, "Hope" Is the Thing With Feathers" Hughes, "A Negro Speaks of Rivers" Merwin, "For a Coming Extinction" (RP 1-7)	
2	T 1/17	Thoreau, "Where I Lived," "Solitude," and "Visitors" from <i>Walden</i> (RP 8-33)	Canvas Post by Monday Replies by Wednesday
	R 1/19	Muir, "Through the Foothills with a Flock of Sheep," "In Camp on the North Fork of the Merced," "The Yosemite" from <i>My First Summer in the Sierra</i> (RP 34-59)	
3	T 1/24	Jewett, "A White Heron" (RP 60-66) Zitkala-Ša, <i>Old Indian Legends</i> , "Iktomi and the Fawn," "The Badger and the Bear," "The Tree-Bound," "Shooting of the Red Eagle" (105-122)	Canvas Post by Monday Replies by Wednesday
	R 1/26	Zitkala-Ša, <i>American Indian Stories</i> "Impressions of an Indian Girlhood," The School Days of an Indian Girl," "An Indian Teacher Among Indians," and "The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman" (1-41 and 69-80)	
4	T 1/31	Conrad, <i>Heart of Darkness</i> (Part I, 1-37)	Essay 1 due (no Canvas post this week)
	R 2/2	<i>Heart of Darkness</i> (Part II, 38-67)	

Week	Date	Reading Due	Writing Due in Class
5	T 2/7	<i>Heart of Darkness</i> (Part III, 68-96)	Canvas Post by Monday Replies by Wednesday
	R 2/9	Thurber, "The Wood Duck" (RP 67-70) and start Hitchcock, <i>The Birds</i>	
6	T 2/14	<i>The Birds</i>	NOTE: Canvas Post by Wednesday Replies by Thursday
	R 2/16	Borchert, "The Dandelion" (RP 71-84)	
7	T 2/21	Carson, <i>Silent Spring</i> (Ch.1-5 & 8)	Final Project Proposal Canvas Post by Monday Replies by Wednesday
	R 2/23	Carson, <i>Silent Spring</i> (Ch. 9 & 17) Kolbert, <i>The Sixth Extinction</i> (Ch. I, V, & VI)	
8	T 2/28	Kolbert, <i>The Sixth Extinction</i> (Ch. VII-X & XIII)	Essay 2 due (no Canvas post this week)
	R 3/2	Kincaid, <i>A Small Place</i> (1-37)	
9	T 3/7	Kincaid, <i>A Small Place</i> (41-87)	Canvas Post by Monday Replies by Wednesday
	R 3/9	Yamashita, <i>Through the Arc of the Rainforest</i> (Parts I & II)	
10	T 3/14	<i>Through the Arc of the Rainforest</i> (Parts III & IV)	Canvas Post by Monday Replies by Wednesday
	R 3/16	<i>Through the Arc of the Rainforest</i> (Parts V & VI)	
Finals Week		Final Project Due Tuesday 3/21 at 2pm in PLC 241	