Spring 2020  Environmental Classics (ENVI 280)

Wednesdays 7pm – 10pm // OLRI 243

Prof. Christie Manning
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Office: OLRI 158A // Office hours: Monday 1:15-2:30, or by appointment

Course preceptors: Phuong Nguyen and Gabbi Rutherford
Contact: pnguyen1@macalester.edu; grutherf@macalester.edu
Office hours by appointment - Phuong: Sunday afternoon; Gabbi: M&W

Course Description

What is the history and evolution of environmental thinking and writing? How have writers shaped the ways we understand our relationship with the natural world? This course explores these questions, drawing in roughly equal measure on ‘classic’ texts from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. The ideas introduced by these classic texts are still present, implicitly and explicitly, in much of today’s environmental discourse.

This course will use a selection of books and papers that have had a major impact on academic and wider public thinking – primarily in the USA. Through engaged discussion, we will trace the impact of each text, beginning with the context in which it was written and ending with its influence on our contemporary understandings of the environment. In addition, we will seek to understand the characteristics of ‘classic’ texts that hold attention, encourage new ways of thinking, and facilitate social change.

Course goals

• To trace the influence of the ideas, authors and texts that have shaped the environmental movement and the field of environmental studies

• To encounter other voices, whose ideas were not influential in the traditional environmental canon but whose contributions are worthy of consideration.

• To engage in participatory and collaborative learning through group discussion and debate, and the practice of respectfully expressing and listening to divergent opinions

• To experience the role of discussion facilitator/teacher

• To consider and (re)define the essential qualities of a classic

Learning objectives

• Critically evaluate the strengths and shortcomings of traditional classic works, both, with respect to the context in which they were written as well as to issues of today

• Recognize the value of voices and ideas overlooked by the traditional environmental canon

• Identify how the ideas presented in environmental texts are relevant to our own lives

• Connect insights encountered in environmental texts to other sources of environmental thinking and rhetoric

• Develop and improve public presentation skills, writing clarity, and facilitation expertise

• Form a desire to create the next environmental classic
My hopes/expectations of you

• Attend every class.
• Be present and engaged. Listen. Ask questions. Offer your perspective.
• Leave your technology in your backpack!
• Communicate with me. Early. Often. Especially if you are struggling with any aspect of the course.
• Take responsibility for your own learning and growth.
• Be open to the diversity of perspectives that are available from your peers in this class.
• Come to my office hours to chat - not just about class, but about your life and ambitions, who you are and what you want to do to help fix what’s broken in our world.
• Work with Phuong and Gabbi, the class preceptors.

Course materials

Required Books (available at college bookstore, library reserve, and for sale online):
Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*
Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

Other Readings:
All other readings listed in the Readings Schedule are available through the course Moodle website.

Course requirements and evaluation

Final grades for the course will be based on the following:
1. Completion of weekly reading preparation 10% (graded on a 0-5 basis, see explanation on Moodle)
2. Attendance at and summary of 3 EnviroThursday presentations (required, not graded) (5%)
3. Participation 15%
4. Essay 1 (5-7 pages; 15%)
5. Essay 2 (6-8 pages; 15%)
6. Essay 3 (7-10 pages; 15%)
7. Alternative classic presentation in class 10%
8. Plan and facilitate discussion in class. Grade includes preparation for meeting with Christie, written summary of class plan, in-class facilitation, summary of student Moodle comments, and post-meeting reflection 15%

Assignment descriptions are available on Moodle.

If you submit any of the above assignments late, you will be graded down one full grade for each day beyond the deadline. That is, if an assignment that was due on Wednesday is turned in on Friday, the highest grade it can receive is a C+.

Final Grade Scale:
A (95 – 100), A- (90 – 94), B+ (87 – 89), B (84 – 86), B- (80 – 83). Similar ranges apply for C grades and D grades. Below 60 is a failing grade.
**Accommodations**

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course, and I urge you to speak with me about unique learning needs or accommodations. Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please meet with the Director of Disability Services, Melissa Fletcher (mfletche@macalester.edu), who coordinates accommodations. It is important to meet with her at the beginning of the semester to ensure that your accommodations are approved and in place so that you can begin the semester with greatest chance for success.

If you are working with Melissa, or someone else in the Office of Student Affairs, and need accommodations for this class, please speak with me at the beginning of the semester so that we can discuss arrangements. Additional information regarding the accommodations process for students with disabilities can be found at: [www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices](http://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices)

**Academic resources**

The Macalester Academic Excellence (MAX) Center (x6121; Kagin Commons) is here to help you do your best at Macalester in meeting your own goals and highest standards. Through academic enrichment and support services, ranging from workshops to individual assistance, the MAX Center can help you excel in your academics.

Professional counselors and peer tutors in writing, mathematics, science, and study skills provide personal assistance in:

- Writing for any college course, from brainstorming to final editing
- Content areas such as calculus, statistics, organic chemistry, or cellular biology
- Sharpening study and time management skills

General hours are 9:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M., M-F and 7 P.M. – 10 P.M., S-Th. Peer tutors are usually available in all areas during the evening, but as schedules vary during the day, it is useful to call x6121 (daytime) or x6193 during evening hours to schedule an appointment.

The MAX Center also provides testing accommodations. Students must verify the need for accommodations through the Office of Student Affairs.

**Academic integrity**

All students will be required to abide by the Macalester College academic integrity guidelines. Instances of suspected academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, and using the same paper in more than one course) will be handled as outlined in the guidelines.

[https://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/](https://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/)
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<td>29-Jan</td>
<td>Course Intro</td>
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<td>5-Feb</td>
<td>Early inklings of ecology</td>
<td>Thoreau</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>12-Feb</td>
<td>What is nature (for)?</td>
<td>John Muir and Gifford Pinchot</td>
<td>Essay 1 discussion</td>
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<td>19-Feb</td>
<td>Circles of ethical concern</td>
<td>Aldo Leopold’s <em>A Sand County Almanac</em></td>
<td>Essay 1 outline exchange in class</td>
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<td>26-Feb</td>
<td>Indigenous perspectives</td>
<td>Readings from Robin Wall Kimmerer’s <em>Braiding Sweetgrass</em> and Winona LaDuke’s <em>All Our Relations</em></td>
<td>Essay 1 draft deadline, peer review</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4-Mar</td>
<td>The toxic sea around us</td>
<td>Rachel Carson’s <em>Silent Spring</em></td>
<td>Essay 1 peer reviews due (submit a copy of each review to preceptor!)</td>
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<td>11-Mar</td>
<td>Getting over growth</td>
<td>Readings from E.F. Schumacher and H. Daly</td>
<td>Essay 1 revision deadline; Essay 2 discussion</td>
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<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>25-Mar</td>
<td>Global Voices</td>
<td>Four speeches by international environmental leaders</td>
<td>Essay 2 outline exchange</td>
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<td>1-Apr</td>
<td>April Fools Environmental Film Night</td>
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<td>Essay 2 draft critique</td>
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<td>8-Apr</td>
<td>Critics of the environmental movement</td>
<td>Selections from Schellenberger &amp; Nordhaus, and Gelobter et al.</td>
<td>Essay 2 deadline</td>
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<td>15-Apr</td>
<td>Radical Action</td>
<td>Excerpts from Edward Abbey’s <em>The Monkey Wrench Gang</em> and other direct action readings TBD</td>
<td>Essay 3 discussion</td>
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<td>STUDENT CHOICE</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Essay 3 draft critique</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>29-Apr</td>
<td>STUDENT CHOICE</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Trip to Ordway. Meet bus at 6:50pm.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>7-May</td>
<td>STUDENT CHOICE</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Final Essay 3 due on Moodle by 7:30 pm</td>
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