

ESM 330: Environmental & Ecological Literacy Fall 2023

Class Meetings: MW 9:00 – 10:05; plus asynchronous online content and assignments

Classroom: PKM 293

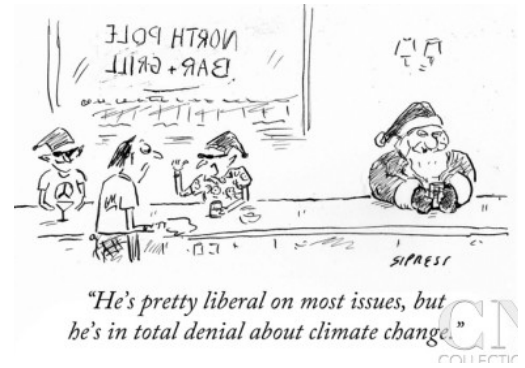
Instructor: Jeff Gerwing, Associate Professor of Environmental Science and Management

Office: B1-24C, SRTC

Phone: 503-725-4482

e-mail: jgerwing@pdx.edu

Remote Office hours: Mondays 11:00 – Noon



Required Texts:

1. Thomas, L. 2022. *The intersectional environmentalist: how to dismantle systems of oppression to protect people + planet* (First edition.). Voracious, Little, Brown and Company.
2. Schlottmann, C., et al. 2017. *Environment and Society, A Reader*. New York University Press, New York. (available **as a free ebook** from the PSU library: <https://search.library.pdx.edu/permalink/f/p82vj0/CP71270959410001451>)
3. An additional book will be required for your book group assignment.
4. Additional required readings will be available online through the course Canvas website.

Course overview

In this course we will examine the concepts, approaches, and ideas that shape our understanding of the interactions, often collisions, between human activities and the rest of the world. We will seek to better understand how our ideas and expectations about the other-than-human natural world shape the way we interact with it and we will work on answering the question “What does it mean to be *environmentally literate* in the beginning of the 21st century?” by:

- Reading and discussing environmental texts from a variety of genres,
- Exploring and developing our own ecological literacies, &
- Examining how contemporary issues may be redefining what it means to be “environmentally literate”.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course the successful student will have:

1. Critically read and thoughtfully discussed diverse genres of environmental texts.
2. Described some of the “big ideas” and key antagonisms in the evolution of the environmental thought and understanding in the United States.
3. Explained how these big ideas and antagonisms are relevant to some contemporary environmental issues.
4. Communicated effectively and thoughtfully on environmental matters with careful consideration of audience and purpose.

Course policies - Please make yourself familiar with the following policies so that you understand clearly what is expected of you as a student in ESM 330.

Attendance & Active course engagement: A significant portion of the learning in this course will come from active engagement with your peers, instructor, and the course content during class. Thus, your attendance at all scheduled classes is expected. That said, some of us will need to miss some classes for illness, emergencies, and other compelling reasons. If you need to miss class please contact Dr. Gerwing, in advance if possible, to let me know; this is particularly important if you end up needing to miss several classes.

Late work policy: Late work turned in within one week of the original due date will receive a 20% point deduction. Work that is turned in later than one week following the due date will not be accepted unless a prior arrangement has been made with Dr. Gerwing.

Technology etiquette: To foster a positive environment that is free of distractions there is a zero-tolerance cell phone policy. **I expect all phones to be turned off during all class sessions.** Use of laptop computers, and other hand-held devices, in class to take notes, organize comments, or do research related to class discussions is permitted.

Brief descriptions of some of the course assignments

Canvas reading quizzes: These will be short quizzes designed to encourage everyone to stay caught up on the assigned readings. The questions are intended to be relatively “easy” for those who have completed the reading. Quizzes are generally due at 11:59 pm on the Sunday night before the readings will be discussed in class on Monday. **Late reading quizzes will not be accepted.**

Wednesday class discussions: On five Wednesdays throughout the term, we will have class discussions based on one or two guiding questions provided by the instructor. Students will work in groups & self-grade based on their preparedness & engagement. There will be a Canvas based make-up option for those who need to miss a Wednesday class discussion due to illness or other compelling circumstances.

Environmental book reading group: Together with 4 – 6 other members of the class you will read and discuss a book. Each group member will co-lead one of the discussions and each group will Do a brief report-out to the class on their book.

Take-home mid-term: 4 short essay questions that will ask you to make specific references to the readings and class discussions from the first five weeks of the term.

Documentary film analysis: A 2 – 3 page essay that analyses how some of the key environmental perspectives we discuss in class are portrayed in an environmental documentary.

Environmental Literacy Asynchronous “Labs”: Because this is a hybrid course, approx. 1/3 of the points (and your effort on the course) will be spent completing asynchronous labs.

Course Assignments & Assessment:	Points
<u>Engagement with course content</u>	
➤ Canvas Reading quizzes (6 x 4 points each)	24
➤ Wednesday discussions (5 x 8 points each)	40
➤ “Take home” Mid-term	20
<u>Interpreting, analyzing, and communicating environmental information</u>	
➤ Environmental book group discussion & presentation	30
○ Attendance and participation in group discussions	
○ Co-facilitation of one discussion	
○ Class “report out”	
➤ Environmental documentary film analysis	20
<u>Environmental Literacy Asynchronous “Labs” (15 - 17 points each)</u>	
➤ What is environmental literacy/studies?	
➤ Environmental identity	
➤ Environmental literacy in career & vocation	
➤ Constructive connectivity & finding your “people”	
<u>Total possible points</u>	200

Final Grades:

Final grades will be assessed based on 200 total points and assigned according to this table:

Grade	Total Points	% of possible points	Grade	Total Points	% of possible points
A	200-185	92.5	C	152-145	72.5
A-	184-179	89.5	C-	144-139	69.5
B+	178-173	86.5	D+	138-133	66.5
B	172-165	82.5	D	132-125	62.5
B-	164-159	79.5	D-	124-119	59.5
C+	158-153	76.5	F	118 or below	Below 59.5

ESM 330 – Course Schedule - Fall 2023

This is the expected schedule for topics, readings, and assignments for this term. However, changes are possible as the term progresses due to the needs of students and instructor. If there are changes, I will notify everyone via Canvas and during class with as much prior notice as possible.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 11:59 PM ON THE DATE LISTED.

Class Dates	Class topics	Assigned readings <i>"E&S" = Environment & Society: A Reader</i>	Reading Quizzes	Other Assignments	Friday "Labs"
Week 1: What is Environmental Literacy/Studies for the 21st Century?					
9/25	NO CLASS				
9/27	Introductions & Practice Discussion - What is Environmental Literacy/Studies?	<i>E&S</i> , Introduction (pp. 1 - 2); "Contested Meanings of Environment" (16 pp.), R. Cox; <i>Intersectional Environmentalist</i> "Foreword" & "Introduction" (pp. ix - 13).			
Weeks 2 & 3: Ideas of Nature					
10/2	What is "Nature"?	<i>E&S</i> , Chs. 1, 4, & 5; & "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" (5 pp.), L. White.	Sun, 10/1		
10/4	Discussion 1 What (or who?) is "Nature"? & Book group "contracts"	"Native Americans Define the Natural Community", Black Elk; "Walking back into creation: Environmental Apartheid and the eternal - Initiating an indigenous mind claim", J Sheridan 7 RD Longboat.			# 1 - Sun., 10/8
10/9	The trouble with wilderness	<i>E&S</i> , Chs. 28 & 6; "The Trouble With Wilderness" (20 pp.), W. Cronon.	Sun, 10/8		
10/11	NO SCHEDULED CLASS MEETING - Book group #1	First 1/3 of your book group book.			
Weeks 4 & 5: Environmental Movements					
10/16	Land Ethics	"Thinking Like a Mountain" & "The Land Ethic" from <i>A Sand County Almanac</i> , A. Leopold	Sun, 10/15		
10/18	Discussion 2 - Did Aldo Leopold Consider me?	"Alien Land Ethic: The Distance Between", L. Savoy			# 2 - Sun., 10/22

10/23	Silent Spring & Beyond	<i>E&S</i> , Ch. 9; "How Silent Spring Ignited the Environmental Movement", E. Griswold; & other TBA	Sun, 10/22		
10/25	NO SCHEDULED CLASS - Book group #2	First 2/3's of your book group book.			
Weeks 6, 7, & 8 Environmentalism & Environmental Justice					
10/30	NO CLASS	Mid-terms are due at 11:59pm		Mid-term Mon., 10/30	
11/1	Discussion 3 - Intersectionality & Environmental Justice	<i>Intersectional Environmentalist</i> , Chs. 1 & 2 (pp. 15 – 59).			# 3-Sun., 11/5
11/6	Unpacking privilege & Who's affected	<i>Intersectional Environmentalist</i> , Chs. 3 & 4 (pp. 61 – 109).	Sun, 11/5		
11/8	NO SCHEDULED CLASS- Book group #3				
11/13	Climate Justice	Readings TBA	Sun, 11/12		
11/15	Book group report outs in class.				# 4-Sun., 11/19
Weeks 9 & 10 Reimagining Thanksgiving and closing thoughts					
11/20	NO SCHEDULED CLASS MEETING	Time to view films/write essays			
11/22	NO IN-PERSON CLASS - Discussion 4 is on Canvas	Readings TBA		Film analysis Sun, 11/26	
11/27	Env. Film discussions				
11/29	Discussion 5 - So what is Environmental Literacy?	<i>Intersectional Environmentalist</i> , Chs. 5 & "Toolkit" (pp. 111 – 174).			