

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
Lewis & Clark College  
Graduate School of Education and Counseling

**Course Name:** Foundations of Ecopsychology  
**Course Number:** CPSY 590  
**Term:** Fall 2009  
**Department:** Counseling Psychology  
**Faculty Name:** Thomas Joseph Doherty, Psy.D.  
**Faculty Phone/E-mail:** 503-288-1213 / tdoherty@lclark.edu  
**Guest Lecturer** Patricia Hasbach, Ph.D.

**Course Calendar & Meeting Times:**

**Days:** (Weekends) October 3-4, November 6-7, 2009

**Times:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Rodgers Hall Rooms 108 & 105

**Catalogue Description:**

Ecopsychology is a contemporary movement within psychology that recognizes a connection between mental health and the natural environment and explores ways in which psychology can contribute to the solution of environmental problems. This course provides (1) an introduction to ecopsychology practices in counseling and (2) a survey of related research-based approaches, such as environmental and conservation psychology, that study the restorative effects of natural settings and ways that individuals develop environment identities. Students will be guided toward self-reflection regarding their own environmental identity, their motivations for integrating environmental approaches into counseling, and ways to integrate ecopsychology into their existing theory and practice base. A key outcome will be learning to evaluate diverse knowledge claims that coexist under the ecopsychology paradigm. This course provides a foundation for further study in areas such as the psychology of environmental advocacy and sustainability, eco-therapy, and wilderness therapy.

**Course Description:**

- This is a two credit, semester long course that meets on two weekends and also has self-directed and online activities. Given the weekend format, activities and readings will be scheduled before, during, and after our meetings.
- We will balance didactic presentations with exercises, role plays, outdoor activities, video presentations, and guest speakers from the local community. The course includes readings, written work, online dialog, and in class presentations.
- Each weekend will include classroom time and outdoor activities on campus. Please dress appropriately for the weather.
- All students are required to log in and use the course Moodle page (some portions are under renovation). To confirm that you received this message, you will also be asked to send a confirmation message in reply.
- Patricia Hasbach, Ph.D., an instructor for our Ecotherapy class, will be guest teaching on day two, Sunday, October 4.

## **Course Goals and Objectives:**

For the purposes of this foundation course, the term ecopsychology will be defined as an overarching concept that allows us to explore the work of (1) thinkers and practitioners that adopt a psychological or psychotherapeutic approach to understand human-nature interactions and address environmental issues and (2) helpful subfields within psychology such as environmental, conservation and critical psychology (e.g., research-based approaches to studying human-nature relationships, behavior change, and the restorative effects of natural environments).

The goals for our course include providing students with:

- (1) An introduction to ecopsychology practices in counseling and a survey of related research-based approaches, such as environmental and conservation psychology
- (2) A personal and experiential sense of how this material relates to their life and identity
- (3) Ways to integrate this work into their academic and professional development.

### **Key values include:**

- **Academic rigor:** Students will be challenged to demonstrate the theoretical and empirical grounding of their work, use discipline in language (e.g., recognizing multiple meanings of commonly used terms such as “nature”), and recognize the opportunities and pitfalls of working in interdisciplinary modes.
- **Theoretical and methodological pluralism:** Coursework will recognize the value of diverse theoretical and practical applications within counseling psychology and ecologically-focused psychology.
- **Self reflection and collaboration:** Students will be provided opportunities for examination of personal and professional motivations regarding ecologically-focused psychology and opportunities for collaboration across the value systems.
- **Effective application:** The importance of practical and measurable outcomes when working with individuals and the local community will be encouraged.
- **Ethical thinking:** Decision making will recognize the principles of counseling ethics as well as the limitations of existing ethics codes in providing guidance for ecologically-based action.

## **Course Requirements:**

1. Regular class attendance
2. Informed participation in discussion of reading assignments
3. Short personal description (50-75 words)
4. Reflection papers x 2
5. Weekly Online Journal
6. Indoor and outdoor exercises
7. In class personal reflection regarding one of the class exercises
8. Environmental identity interview of class member
9. Final Research / Integration Paper
10. Student directed project (optional for advanced students)

## **Evaluation and Assessment:**

Written and oral presentations will be evaluated on the basis of their clarity, thoughtfulness, and integration of themes and issues discussed in the class. A grade of A will be given to papers and presentations that are clear, thoughtful, and tied to the themes of the course. B papers and presentations will be missing one or more of these elements. C papers and presentations will be returned for revision or a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt. The course may also be taken as a Credit/No Credit option.

## **Moodle Login Instructions**

*Note: Continuing Studies Students who are not registered Lewis & Clark students will be manually enrolled in the Moodle system by the IT Dept.*

1. Go to the Moodle course page at <https://moodle.lclark.edu/course/view.php?id=901>
2. When prompted, login to Moodle using your L&C login and password
3. Next you'll be prompted to enter the enrollment key for the course – use: eco

Once you've enrolled in the class, you can simply go to [moodle.lclark.edu](https://moodle.lclark.edu) and the Foundations of Ecopsychology course will be listed in your My Courses list. You can also find it in the Graduate School - Counseling Psychology section on the LC Moodle web page.

If you have problems enrolling, the IT can help at x7225 (Help Desk), x6195 (Damian Miller, Grad IT consultant) or email [consult@lclark.edu](mailto:consult@lclark.edu).

## **Course Readings:**

The course has (3) required texts (available at the LC bookstore). Additional readings for each weekend are available on the Lewis & Clark Moodle Site:

<https://moodle.lclark.edu/course/view.php?id=733> . The is also an extensive list of background readings on Moodle for use in students' final projects.

### **Required texts:**

Winter, Deborah Du Nann & Koger, Sue (2004). *The psychology of environmental problems* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. ISBN: 9780805846317.

Roszak, T., Gomes M. E., & Kanner A. (Eds.). *Ecopsychology*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.

Callenbach, E. (2008). *Ecology: A pocket guide*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

### **Optional background texts in environmental psychology, ecological thought, and environmental science:**

Bechtel R. B. & Churchman, A. (Eds.) (2002) *Handbook of environmental psychology*. New York: Wiley.

Gardner, P. & Stern, P. C. (2002). *Environmental problems and human behavior* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing.

Harding, S. (2006) *Animate Earth: Science, Intuition and Gaia*. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing

Lundberg, A. (1998). *The environment and mental health: A guide for clinicians*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Orr, D. (1992). *Ecological literacy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Snyder, G. (1990). *The practice of the wild*. San Francisco: North Point Press.

Thomashow, M. (2002). *Bringing the biosphere home: Learning to perceive global environmental change*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

## Foundations of Ecopsychology

### Weekend # 1      **October 3-4, 2009**

- **Ecopsychology: History and Context**
- **Personal Aspects of Ecopsychology and Environmental Identity**

#### **Experiential activities:**

- Systems Game
- Mirror exercise
- Self Exploration: Childhood sense of place exercise
- Self Exploration: Eco-genogram
- Self Exploration: Students select outdoor retreat locations on Lewis & Clark Campus

**Student Presentations:** Students describe their experiences of in-class exercises

#### **Day One Assignments:**

##### **Personal Description**

**Due: Friday 10/2/09 12:00 PM**

Short personal description (50-75 words): Describe yourself (e.g., age, background, and academic focus), your interests or experiences with ecopsychology or related areas, and any goals you have for this course.

\*Post this electronically to the course Moodle Site on the class forum page. Start a new discussion topic for your description.

##### **Readings for our first day**

**Due: Saturday 10/3/09**

Be prepared to discuss the following readings in class (either through a discussion or a short answer quiz). The readings illustrate different ways of thinking about the psychology of human-nature relationships. Questions to keep in mind:

- What are your emotional reactions to the reading?
- How does the reading correspond with your understanding of psychology and environmental issues?
- What is the main point(s) that the writer is trying to convey?
- What did you learn from the reading?

Macy, J. (1995). Working through environmental despair. In Roszak, T., Gomes M. E., & Kanner A. (Eds.). *Ecopsychology*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books. Pages 240-262) **(Text)**.

Shultz, P. W. (2002). Inclusion with nature: The psychology of human-nature relations. P. Shmuck & P. W. Shultz (Eds). *The psychology of sustainable development*. (Pages 61-78). Norwell, MA: Kluwer. **(Moodle) Readings:**                     **Due 10/11/08**

Snyder, G. (1990). *The Practice of the Wild*. San Francisco: North Point Press. -- Chapter 1: The etiquette of freedom (pp. 3-24). **(Moodle)**.

Winter, D. D. (2000). Some Big Ideas for Some Big Problems. *American Psychologist* 55,

516–522 (Moodle).

## Day Two Assignments 10/4/09:

**Guest Lecturer: Patricia Hasbach, Ph.D.**

**Readings for our second day**

**Due: Sunday 10/4/09**

### Moodle Articles:

Rick Tarnas - The Great Initiation  
E. Bragg - Towards Ecological Self  
J. Macy - Chapter 2 - Coming Back to Life

### Texts:

Lester Brown - EP and the Environmental Revolution (Ecopsychology text)  
James Hillman - A Psyche the Size of the Earth (Ecopsychology text)  
Anita Barrows - The EP of Child Development (Ecopsychology text)  
Winter & Koger. The Psychology of environmental problems - Chapter 1

## Reflection papers and weekly journal assignments

### 1st Reflection Paper: Discourses within Ecopsychology.

- **Due 10/14/09:** Post paper to Moodle forum.
- **Due 10/16/09:** Review and make a short comment on at least one classmate's post.

Using the readings assigned for the 1st weekend of the course (days one & two), compare and contrast different styles of ecopsychology writing. Reference at least 4 of the readings, using direct quotes from the text.

Examples of attributes to discuss:

- Nature: How is the concept of "nature" defined (explicitly or implicitly)? Does the author approach this from a romantic, rational, or post-modern perspective?
- Cultural criticism: Does the author exhibit an explicit or implicit critique of dominant or mainstream culture?
- What is the role of science or empiricism in the text?
- What is the role of language or art?
- How does the selected reading inform counseling or therapy?
- Does the reading illustrate a well-known theoretical perspective in counseling or psychology (e.g., cognitive, psychodynamic, humanistic, systemic)?

### Weekly Moodle Journal Entry Due Tuesdays 10/20/09 – 11/24/09

Make a note about how the course material is being integrating into your academic or professional work or personal life and goals. Make a reference to at least one entry from *Ecology: A pocket guide*. Optional: Reference one of the course readings. Length: 50 words minimum.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reflection Paper: Integrating an ecological perspective

- **Due Thursday 11/5/09:** Post paper to Moodle forum.
- **Due Sunday 11/8/09:** Review and make a short comment on at least one classmate's post.

Reflect on the benefits and challenges of integrating an ecological perspective into counseling psychology.

1. Describe potential benefits of using an ecological perspective in counseling
2. Describe potential challenges or pitfalls
3. Integrate at least **four** of the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend readings, including one entry from *Ecology*, one chapter from Winter & Koger, one chapter from *Ecopsychology*, and one article posted on Moodle.
4. Use direct quotes from readings to back up your points.

Length: Maximum 2 pages, single space. (1000-1500 words).

## **Weekend # 2      November 7-8, 2009**

- **Environmental Identity**
- **Models of Human Nature Relationships**
- **Psychology & Climate Change**
- **Ecopsychology in Counseling Practice**

**Guest Speaker: David Carter, MA**

Positive Psychology: Cultivated Positive Emotions and Environmental Sustainability

### **Experiential activities:**

- Movie & Discussion: *An Inconvenient Truth*
- Outdoor Exercise: Shelter building exercise
- Self Exploration: Personal Sustainability Exercise
- Self Exploration: Students select outdoor retreat locations on Lewis & Clark Campus

**Student Presentations:** Students describe their experiences of in-class exercises and final project topics.

### **Text Readings:**

Callenbach, E. (2008). *Ecology: A pocket guide*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Introduction and pages xv -95 (Entries for Air - Niche)

Roszak, T., Gomes M. E., & Kanner A. (1995). (Eds.). *Ecopsychology*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books. Pages xvii - 121

Winter, D. & Koger, S. (2004). *The psychology of environmental problems*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum. Chapters 2, 4, 7, 8

### **Readings on Moodle:**

Clayton, S. & Brook, A. (2005) Can psychology save the world? *Journal of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 5. 87-102

Doherty, T. J. (2009) A peer-reviewed journal for Ecopsychology. *Ecopsychology*, 1, 1-7.

Kempton & Holland (2003) Identity and sustained environmental practice. In S. Clayton & S. Opatow (Eds.). *Identity and the natural environment: The psychological significance of nature*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 317-341.

Kidner, D. (2007) Depression and the natural world: Towards a critical ecology of psychological distress. *The International Journal of Critical Psychology*, 19, 123-146

Proctor, J. D. (2009). Environment after nature: Time for a new vision. In J. D. Proctor (Ed.). *Envisioning nature, science, and religion*, pp. 293-311. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.

Randall, R. (2009) Loss and climate change: The cost of parallel narratives. *Ecopsychology*, 1, 118-129.

## **Final Research / Integration Paper**

### **Research / Integration Paper Part One: Summary and potential reference list**

#### **Oral presentation, 10 minutes Due: Second Weekend 11/7-8/09**

The final research/integration paper will allow students to explore a self-selected topic related to ecopsychology. These can include: The history and development of ecopsychology, environmental psychology, conservation psychology, child development, climate change, environmental grief, behavior change, spirituality, theoretical perspectives within (e.g., cognitive, gestalt, jungian, etc.). See the special topic areas on the Moodle page and our texts for additional examples.

The oral presentation will allow students to share their topic--in the form of a question, hypothesis, or objective--and receive feedback and suggestions from Thomas and the rest of the class. We will discuss the merits of the topic and potential strategies, references, and resources. Please be prepared with your topic, a preliminary strategy, and at least 10 references drawn from our course materials. You may also integrate references from outside sources.

#### **Final research paper Due 11/25/09**

#### **Length: 8-10 Pages, double-spaced, in APA style**

Post as an attachment on Moodle. Microsoft Word documents or compatible word processing documents are required. Use the following form for the title of the document "yourlastnamefinal 2009.doc" (e.g., "dohertyfinal2009.doc").