Course Name: Eco-therapy  
Course Number: CPSY 590  
Term: Spring 2010  
Department: Counseling Psychology  
Faculty Name: Thomas Joseph Doherty, Psy.D.  
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Course Calendar & Meeting Times:

Days: (Weekends) March 13 – 14, 2010 & April 17 – 18, 2010  
Times: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Locations: SCCC 107

Catalogue Description:

This course will provide resources and techniques for mental health providers to utilize nature activities and metaphors in their therapeutic work, address environmental concerns they may encounter during the course of counseling, and harness individuals' sustainability values to foster therapeutic goals. We will review research and practices in ecopsychology, conservation psychology, and environmental psychology and explore topics such as environmental identity, grief and despair about environmental issues, restorative natural settings, green spaces and children, and the adoption of sustainable living practices.

Course Structure:

The course meets on two weekends and also includes self-directed and online activities outside of the class sessions. We will balance didactic presentations with exercises, role-plays, outdoor activities, and video presentations. Course activities include readings, written work, online dialog, personal exercises, and in-class presentations.

Course Goals and Objectives:

The goals for our course include providing students with:

1. An introduction to ecotherapy practices in counseling and a survey of related research-based approaches in 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.

Students will be guided toward self-reflection regarding their own ecological identity and motivations regarding integrating environmental approaches into counseling psychology. Key outcomes will be recognizing the diverse and sometimes competing environmental discourses and worldviews that coexist within an ecotherapy paradigm and accepting and learning from different social, political environmental viewpoints.
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. Class participation:
   a. Informed discussion of readings
   b. Engagement in class role plays and activities
   c. Personal reflections regarding in-class exercises
   d. Respectful and constructive feedback on peers oral and written work
3. Short personal description (50-75 words)
4. Reflection paper for weekend one -- Two pages maximum (500-1000 words).
5. Self directed exercises and journal entries during mid-course month
6. Final paper integrating constructs related to ecotherapy, counseling ethics, and counseling skills in an ecotherapy context.

**Personal Description**  **Due: At first class weekend 3/14/10**

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

*Post this electronically to the course Moodle Site*

**Reflection Paper**  **Post to class website**  **Due 3/21/10**

Choose two of the readings and one class exercise and (1) briefly summarize each, (2) describe your intellectual and emotional responses, and (3) how the content relates to your personal life and your academic or professional plans. Two pages maximum (1000 – 1500 words). *Post this electronically to the course Moodle Site."

**Moodle Dialog**  **Post to class website**  **Due 3/28/10**

Review at least one classmate’s Online Paper and provide substantive feedback (e.g., points of agreement, differing views, additional ideas).
Final Papers   Post to class website   Due 5/1/10

1. Speak to a core theme or specific construct of ecotherapy (e.g., biophilia / evolutionary perspectives, theoretical conceptions of ecological self). Discuss how this construct or theme relates to the practice of ecotherapy.

2. Review the American Counseling Association Ethics Code and identify at least three potential ethical goals or standards relevant to eco-therapy in practice. Chose three course readings and explain how they provide theoretical or empirical support for the ethics topics you have chosen.

3. Finally, discuss how ecotherapy or an ecological perspective informs your current or future professional practice as a counselor (e.g., through techniques you use, problems you address or populations or groups you serve).

Three pages maximum (1500-2000 words). Post this electronically to the course Moodle Site.

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+ and B papers and presentations will be missing one or more of these elements. C papers and presentations will be returned for revision or a 2nd attempt. Course participation grading will also follow this format and students with unsatisfactory participation will be notified mid-course. 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=1106
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 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.

Posting your personal description:

1. Click on " Ecotherapy Spring 2010 Forum " on the top of the course will page.
2. Click "Add new discussion topic"
3. Create a title (e.g.," Thomas's personal description")
4. Type or paste your personal description in the message box
5. Click "post to the forum"
Course Readings

The course has (2) required texts (available at the LC bookstore) and additional readings available on the Lewis & Clark Moodle Site.

Required texts:


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

Text Readings

*Ecotherapy: Healing With Nature in Mind*

Forward – Orr
Introduction – Buzzell & Chalquist
A psyche as big as the earth – Roszak
Ecopsychology as radical praxis – Fisher
Ecotherapy research & psychology of homecoming – Chalquist
The path to happiness: integrating nature with therapy – Burns
Opening to the other – Conn
Tailoring nature therapy to the client – Scull
Children and nature: the great disconnect – Louv
Creating restorative ecotherapeutic practices – Watkins

*Ecopsychology*

Ecopsychology and the environmental revolution – Brown
Where psyche meets Gaia – Roszak
A psyche the size of the earth - Hillman
The psychopathology of the human nature relationship – Metzner
The all-consuming self – Kanner & Gomes
Jungian psychology and the world unconscious – Aizenstat
Ecological groundedness in gestalt therapy - Calahan

Moodle Readings:


Chawla, L. – Life Paths into Effective Environmental Action

Chawla, L. – Significant Life Experiences Revisited


Kahn, P. – The Biophilia Hypothesis

Kaplan & Kaplan – The Restorative Benefits of Nature


Macy, J. – Coming Back to Life – Chapter 2


Orchin, I. – In Consultation: Taking Therapy Outdoors
Plotkin, B. – The Wild Human

Plotkin, B. – Soulcraft Prologue


Roszak – Afterward: Ecopsychology Since 1982


Saunders, C. – The Emerging Field of Conservation Psychology


Soule, M. – What is Conservation Biology?


Tarnas, R. – The Great Initiation
Weekend # 1 March 13-14, 2010

Topics: See agenda

Experiential activities: See agenda

Video Presentations: See agenda

- *Ecopsychology* video and discussion

Ecotherapy Demonstrations:

- Pat Hasbach:
  - Intake session
  - Relaxation Exercises
  - Use of poetry and ritual
- Thomas Doherty:
  - Facilitating lifestyle changes
  - Group Therapy Activities

Mid-Course March – April 2010

Mid-course Exercise: Place Bonding

During the four weeks between our class meeting weekends, we would like you to develop a relationship with some special place in nature. This place may be a site in wild nature, in a local park, on campus, in your own backyard or garden, or any outdoor space you are drawn to.

Please go there at least once/week for the next several weeks. Go there at various times of the day and in different weather conditions. We would like you to write a journal entry each time you visit your special place. Here are a few suggestions for your journaling:

1. How do you feel in this place? What state of mind arises in you here?
2. What is the nature of your relationship with this place?
3. How do you experience, if at all, healing in this place?
4. What are the relationships in this place?
5. What sensations do you notice when you are here?
6. What do you feel compelled to write about when you are in this special place?

Please bring your journal entries with you to our second weekend class meeting.

See class and Moodle for additional activities
Weekend # 2  April 17-18, 2010

Experiential activities: See Agenda

• Nature and self observation exercise
• Individual reflection and group discussion: Branding and media influences
• ACA Ethics Code exercise

Video Presentations: See Agenda

• A Sense of Place video and discussion
• Joanna Macy video and discussion

Ecotherapy Demonstrations: See Agenda

• Pat Hasbach: Outdoor relaxation exercise using restorative natural setting imagery
• Thomas Doherty: Diagnostic interview

Additional Ecotherapy Bibliography


