

Minnesota State University Moorhead

ENGL 435: Nature Writing/Ecocriticism

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3

Lecture Hours/Week: 3

Lab Hours/Week: *.*

OJT Hours/Week: *.*

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: Goal 10 - People/Environment

Ecocriticism is a fairly recent cultural and literary development, the term coined in the late 1970s. This course introduces students to representative ecocritical texts that study the relationship between humans and the environment. Significant attention will be devoted to issues of sustainability, eco-literacy, and the efficacy of literary expressions of environmental value. MnTC Goal 10.

B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES: 03/03/2014 - Present

C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. Ecocriticism: history since term coined in 1976
2. Brief overview of British "Green Studies" and relevance to American Ecocriticism
3. Early ecocritical texts
4. Reading ecocritical texts
5. Aldo Leopold and the Land Ethic
6. Edward Abbey and the value of radical perspectives
7. Rachel Carson and 1960s environmental policy developments
8. Sustainability and ecosystems
9. Androcentrism, anthropocentrism, ecocentrism, biocentrism
10. Climate change
11. Local concerns: watershed thinking, dying lakes, prairie restoration, etc.
12. Texts as locales, locals as texts
13. The efficacy of language to instigate change (at individual, social, & global levels; in policy decision-making)
14. Principles of ecoliteracy

D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)

1. Recognize that Ecocriticism is a distinct area of study
2. Appreciate various forms of writing about the environment through close reading and study
3. Broaden understanding of what constitutes effective writing that brings about social change, environmental awareness, influence on policy-making, etc.
4. Be familiar with basic principles of ecoliteracy
5. Know how to approach, appreciate, and evaluate literary works in which they (human beings) are not necessarily the protagonists
6. Develop strategies for engaging with and writing about the arenas of scientific and environmental inquiry that these literary texts present to them
7. Know the characteristics that make a text Ecocritical
8. Know works of major writers in Ecocriticism

E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies

Goal 10 - People/Environment

1. Explain the basic structure and function of various natural ecosystems and of human adaptive strategies within those systems.
2. Describe the basic institutional arrangements (social, legal, political, economic, religious) that are evolving to deal with environmental and natural resource challenges.
3. Propose and assess alternative solutions to environmental problems.
4. Articulate and defend the actions they would take on various environmental issues.

F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

As noted on course syllabus

G. SPECIAL INFORMATION

None noted