

COURSE CONTENT

Course Code & Title	:	HL4013 Advanced Studies in Literature & Culture: Ecocritical Approaches to Literature (Category F: Specific Interest Subjects)
Academic Unit	:	4 AU
Pre-requisite	:	HL1001

Course Description

This module examines some pressing issues in Ecocriticism, a growing field which studies the relationship between literature and the physical environment. We will start with a text which envisions systemic change needed to stem socio-ecological degradation (Le Guin), move on to a dystopian text which limns social breakdown and repair (Lessing), followed thereafter by a provocative use of satire to explore the cultural politics of climate (McEwan); and close with two “postcolonial” ecocritical texts that raise important social justice and existential considerations (Sinha, Ghosh). The texts are used to examine the tensions and antinomies underpinning contemporary environmental debates and praxis. Among other things, we will examine frameworks and perspectives such as climate-change denialism, reform environmentalism (eco-modernization), anthropocentrism, the nature/culture dualism critiqued by eco-feminists, trans-corporeality, the “wilderness” ideal, “the environmentalism of the poor,” and indigenous sustainability. The module encourages a reassessment of the conceptual oppositions and social cum ecological hierarchies that affect environments and habitats.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will read five important novels in the field and use close reading skills to discuss the issues raised therein. Major writers will be covered.
2. Students will engage *some* important topics and issues in green cultural studies.

Content

Course Outline

Weeks	Text/topic	Readings	<u>Misc / Readings</u>
01	Introduction		References: 1. Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History

			of the 20 th Century (John McNeill) (2000) 2. Feminism and the Mastery of Nature (Val Plumwood) (1993)
02	The Dispossessed		
03	The Dispossessed		
04	The Memoirs of a Survival		
05	The Memoirs of a Survival		
06	Solar		
07	Solar		
	RECESS		
08	Essay Consultation		
09	Animal's People		
10	Animal's People		
11	The Hungry Tide		
12	The Hungry Tide		
13	Summary		

Learning Outcome

Students will obtain an introduction to green cultural studies and its major concerns and debates.

Student Assessment

Students will be assessed by:

Term paper	40%
Presentation and participation	10%
Exam	<u>50%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

The required word count for the term paper (essay) is around 2,200 words.

Textbooks/References

A. The primary readings are:

1. *The Dispossessed*, (1974), by Ursula K. Le Guin
2. *The Memoirs of a Survival* (1974), by Doris Lessing (*Winner, 2007 Nobel Prize for Literature*)
3. *Solar*, (2010), by Ian McEwan
4. *Animal's People*, (2009), by Indra Sinha
5. *The Hungry Tide*, (2004), by Amitav Ghosh

B. Secondary readings include excerpts and ideas taken from below:

1. Stacy Alaimo – *Bodily Natures* (2010)
2. Carolyn Merchant – *The Death of Nature* (1990)
3. Rob Nixon – *Slow Violence and The Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011)
4. William Cronon – “The Trouble with Wilderness; Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature.” (1996)
5. Charles Hall and Kent Klitgaard – *Energy and the Wealth of Nations* (2011).
6. Alf Hornborg – “How to Turn An Ocean Liner: A Proposal for Voluntary Degrowth by Redesigning Money for Sustainability, Justice, and Resilience,” (2017)