

COURSE CONTENT

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| 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 provocative use of satire to explore the cultural politics of climate (McEwan), and close with three “postcolonial” ecocritical texts that raise important social justice and existential considerations (Sinha, Ghosh, and Bobis). 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 novels in the field and use close reading skills to discuss the issues raised therein. Major writers in the field 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) |

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| | | | 2. Feminism and the Mastery of Nature (Val Plumwood) (1993) |
| 02 | The Dispossessed | | |
| 03 | The Dispossessed | | “ <i>The Dispossessed</i> as Ecological Political Theory,” Peter Stillman (2005) |
| 04 | Solar | | |
| 05 | Solar | | “ <i>Solar: Apocalypse Not</i> ” Greg Garrard (2013) |
| 06 | Animal’s People | | |
| 07 | Animal’s People | | “Justice is on Our Side?” <i>Animal’s People</i> , Generic Hybridity, and Eco-Crime” Anthony Carrigan (2012) |
| | RECESS | | |
| 08 | The Hungry Tide | | |
| 09 | The Hungry Tide | | “Amitav Ghosh’s Active Witnessing and the Ethics of Action in <i>The Hungry Tide</i> .” Terri Tomsy (2009) |
| 10 | Locus Girl: A Love Song. | | |
| 11 | Locust Girl: A Love Song | | |
| 12 | Summary | | |
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Learning Outcome

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

Student Assessment

Students will be assessed by:

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|---------------|-------------|
| Term paper | 40% |
| Participation | 10% |
| E-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. Solar, (2010), by Ian McEwan
3. Animal's People, (2009), by Indra Sinha
4. The Hungry Tide, (2004), by Amitav Ghosh
5. Locust Girl: A Love Song, (2015), by Merlinda Bobis.

B. Secondary readings includes excerpts and ideas taken from:

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)

7. Others/ To be confirmed.