

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 study “postcolonial” texts that raise important social justice and existential considerations, a “Sci-Fi” text which envisions systemic change needed to stem socio-ecological degradation (Le Guin), and a satirical text that explores the cultural politics of climate (McEwan). 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 four important texts 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 Hungry Tide		
03	The Hungry Tide		
04	Solar		
05	Solar		
06	The Dispossessed		
07	The Dispossessed		
	RECESS [28 Sept to 2 Oct]		
08	Essay Assignment (in class)		
09	The Dispossessed		
10	Animal's People		NB: This text MAY be replaced by another translated text that will hopefully be released in time for the course. Please hold off on buying <i>Animal's People</i> till August when I confirm the final set text.
11	Animal's People		
12	Group Presentations		
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:

Essay / Class test	30%
Presentation and participation	20%
Exam	<u>50%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

The essay/s will be done in the class test slated for week 8.

Textbooks/References

A. The primary readings are:

1. *The Hungry Tide*, (2004), by Amitav Ghosh
2. *Solar*, (2010), by Ian McEwan
3. *The Dispossessed*, (1974), by Ursula K. Le Guin
4. *Animal's People*, (2009), by Indra Sinha [NB: This text MAY be replaced by another (new) text that will hopefully be released in time for the course. Please hold off on buying *Animal's People* till August when I confirm the final set text.]

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

1. Stacy Alaimo – *Bodily Natures* (2010)
2. Rob Nixon – *Slow Violence and The Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011)
3. William Cronon – “The Trouble with Wilderness; Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature.” (1996)