COURSE SYLLABUS (Draft)

Lewis & Clark College Graduate School of Education and Counseling

Course Name:	Topics in Applied Ecopsychology: Nature and Child
	Development
Course Number:	CPSY 590-51
Term:	Summer 2011
Department:	Graduate School of Counseling
Faculty Name:	Thomas Joseph Doherty, Psy.D.
Faculty Phone/E-mail:	503-288-1213 / thomas@selfsustain.com

Course Calendar & Meeting Times:

Days:	6/11-12/2011 (Weekend)
Times:	9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (with breaks)
Location:	South Campus Conference Center 101

Description:

The focus of the Topics in Applied Ecopsychology course will vary by year, and provide opportunities to explore the role of a counseling psychologist as an ecopsychology advocate, consultant, or researcher, (e.g., the course may focus on topics such as social and environmental justice, diversity issues in ecotherapy and environmentalism, designing effective conservation programs, the needs of special populations such as children, etc.).

The 2011 class focuses broadly on children and nature will present up-to-date research on topics such as one (1) how contact with natural settings, such as parks, gardens or wilderness-like settings; animals, and other natural objects or phenomena influence the development, identity, and well-being of children, (2) how nature experiences or ecotherapy can alleviate emotional or behavioral disorders (e.g., reduce attention-deficit disorder symptoms), and (3) developmentally appropriate ways to address environmental interests or concerns with children. We will focus on cultural beliefs regarding children and nature as well as empirical findings, and situate the discussion in the ongoing evolution of ecopsychology and other environmental psychology work. The coursework will also draw attention to various forms of diversity, socioeconomic class and culture as they relate to the social construction of, and access to, nature and green settings.

Course Activities:

The course is highly experiential. We will balance didactic classroom presentations with opportunities for self-reflection, discussion, outdoor activities, video presentations, and guest speaker(s) from the local community. Examples

of activities include: Students will explore how children interact with the natural world by creating maps of their own childhood neighborhoods and play ranges.

Course Goals and Objectives:

The goals for our course include providing students with:

- (1) An introduction to psychology and related research and findings on children and nature
- (2) An experiential sense of how this material relates to their life and identity
- (3) Ways to integrate this information into their academic and professional development as counselors.

Course Requirements:

- Attendance and active participation in class and field experiences
- Use of Class Moodle page and forums
- 75 word personal description statement
- Informed participation in discussion of reading & assignments
- Brief engagement paper (1 2 pages)
- Informal oral presentation regarding one of the in-class topics or exercises
- Research & reflection paper demonstrating integration of course information with references (4-6 pages)

Related Event: Film Screening & Panel Discussion

The course will include a public film screening and panel discussion of the documentary on children & nature <u>Play Again</u> on Saturday June 11.

Panelists

- Tony Deis, Director, Trackers NW, Portland, OR
- Thomas Doherty, Psy.D., Coordinator of Ecopsychology Studies, Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling, Portland, OR
- Susan Koger, Ph.D. Willamette University, Co-author of The Psychology of Environmental Problems, (3rd Ed.), Salem, OR
- Greg Lemieux, Outreach Coordinator, Ground Productions, Portland, OR
- Peter Mortola, Ph.D. Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling, Portland, OR
- Tiffany Sauls, MD, Chair Children & Nature Network Health Care Providers Work Group, Old Mill Center for Children and Families, Corvallis, OR

Evaluation and Assessment:

Course evaluation is based on written papers, class participation and activities, and optional online Moodle dialog. In this course, the final grade will be based on a weighted average of the course assignment and activity grades: For example, 20% personal description and engagement paper, 30% class participation, and 50% final paper.

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 written, oral and class participation work that is clear, thoughtful, and tied to the themes of the course. B+ or B work will be missing one or more of these elements. C work will be returned for revision or a 2nd attempt. The course may also be taken as a Credit/No Credit option (advisor or instructor approval may be needed).

Assignments

(1) Personal Description -- Due: 6/10/11 (the Friday BEFORE the class meets)

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

• Email to instructor and post this electronically to the course Moodle Site "Personal Description" forum.

(3) Short Engagement Paper -- Due: Sunday June 12, 2011 9 AM (2nd day of class)

Comment on responses and insights from the 1st day, including reference to (1) an in-class activity, (2) a reading or research finding, (3) a take-away from the film screening or panel, and (4) one personal (or family/community) connection to the material.

Length: Minimum of 1 and maximum of 2 double spaced pages.

• Be prepared to discus in class and post this electronically to the course Moodle Site "Short Engagement Paper " forum.

(4) Class Participation / In Class Oral Presentation

There will be multiple opportunities for participation and oral presentations during our class weekend. These will be primarily informal, including personal responses as we discuss course topics and debrief course activities. Students will also have an opportunity to discuss or present a topic of their choice (optional).

(5) Research / Reflection Paper Due 2 weeks following the class

Discuss at least three (3) interacting cultural and/or therapeutic factors at work in the function of restorative natural settings and how these interact with at least one (1) aspect of children's psychological development and at least one (1) aspect of children's mental health or well-being. In your paper, reference at least 3 course readings, 1 class field activity or lecture, and 1 aspect of your personal or cultural experience. Length 4-6 pages, double-spaced, APA style.

Course Readings

The syllabus contains required and suggested readings. For students who have not taken the Foundations of Ecopsychology class or who are interested in background materials for the Ecopsychology Course Sequence, additional references are available from the instructor.

Texts (Note: These texts are also used in all of the other Ecopsychology sequence courses):

Clayton & Myers (2009) Conservation Psychology. Wiley Blackwell

- Chapter 5: Theoretical Foundations for the Human Response to Nature.
- Chapter 6: Domestic nature: Cohabiting with Animals and Plants.
- Chapter 7: Managed Nature: Zoos, Aquariums, and Public Parks.

Optional: Chapter 11: Environmental Education.

Roszak, Gomes & Kanner (1996) Ecopsychology. Sierra Club

- Barrows The Ecopsychology of Child Development
- Sewall The Skill of Ecological Perception

Optional: Shapiro – Restoring Habitats, Communities and Souls

Winter, D. & Koger, S. (2010). *The psychology of environmental problems*. (3rd ed.). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Chapter 9. Developmental Psychology: Growing Healthy Children in Nature.

Optional: Chapter 6: Neurotoxicity of Toxic Exposures

Other Required Readings (To be available on Moodle)

- Chawla, L. (2007). Childhood experiences associated with care for the natural world: A theoretical framework for empirical results. *Children, Youth and Environments, 17*(4), 144-170.
- Faber Taylor, A. & Kuo, F. E. (2006). Is contact with nature important to early child development? State of the evidence. In C. Spencer & M. Blades (Eds.). *Children & their environments.* (pp. 124-140). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Forestry Commission Scotland: (2011). Branching Out - Executive Summary. www.forestry.gov.uk/branchingout

- Karsten, L., & van Vliet-, W. (2006). Children in the city: Reclaiming the street. *Children, Youth and Environments, 16*(1), 151-167.
- Mooney (2011, April 18). The Science of Why We Don't Believe Science. *Mother Jones.* Available at: <u>www.motherjones.com/politics/2011/03/denial-</u> <u>science-chris-mooney</u>
- ScienceDaily (2011, April 26). Green Environments Essential for Human Health, Research Shows. Available at: <u>http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/04/110419151438.htm</u>
- Vadala, C. E., Bixler, R. D. & James, J. J. (2007). Childhood play and Environmental interests. *Journal of Environmental Education, 39,* 3-17
- Varney, D., & van Vliet-, W. (2005). Local environmental initiatives oriented to children and youth: A review of UN-Habitat best practices. *Children, Youth and Environments, 15*(2), 41-52.

Online Resources

Branching Out Program. Forestry Commission Scotland: www.forestry.gov.uk/branchingout

Children & Nature Network (C&NN): <u>http://www.childrenandnature.org/research/</u>

The Landscape and Human Health Laboratory (LHHL). University of Illinois. <u>http://lhhl.illinois.edu/</u>

UK Mind Program: http://www.mind.org.uk/assets/0000/2138/ecotherapy_report.pdf

Additional Optional Readings Available on Moodle (In Process)

- AMERICAN'S PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION: Results From NSRE.
- Chawla, L (1999). Lifepaths into effective environmental action. Journal of Environmental Education, 31(1), 15-26.
- Chawla, L. (2006). Research methods to investigate significant life experiences: Review and recommendations. *Environmental Education Research, 12*(3-4), 359-374.
- Dickerman 2011 Hiking With a Child (and Tricks) in Tow Hiking With a Child (and Tricks) in Tow
- Frumkin, H. (2003). Healthy Places: Exploring the Evidence. *American Journal of Public Health,* 93, 451-1456
- Hartig, T (). Toward Understanding the Restorative Environment as a Health Resource
- Kahn, P. (2001) The biophilia hypothesis: Empirical support & amplifying evidence. In Kahn, P. *The Human Relationship with Nature.* Boston: MIT Press
- Kahn, P. H., Ruckert, J. L., Severson, R. L., Reichert, A. L. & Erin Fowler, E.
 (2010). A Nature Language: An Agenda to Catalog, Save, and Recover Patterns of Human–Nature Interaction. *Ecopsychology*, 2, 59-66.
- Kahn & Hasbach (2011) Rewilding Natural History. ____.
- Kaplan, S. (1995). The restorative benefits of nature: Toward an integrative framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 15.* 169-182
- Karsten, L., & van Vliet-, W. (2006). Increasing children's freedom of movement: Introduction. *Children, Youth and Environments, 16*(1), 69-73. Retrieved from <u>http://www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/16_1/16_1_04_Speciallssue-intro.pdf</u>
- Kidner, D. (1994) Why psychology is mute about the environmental crisis. *Environmental Ethics, 16*, ____.

Louv, R. (). Pending

Moffat, B. M., Johnson, J. L., & Shoveller, J. A. (2009). A gateway to nature: Teenagers' narratives on smoking marijuana outdoors. *Environmental Psychology, 29* 86–94.

- Pergams, O. R. W. & Zaradic, P. A. (2008) Evidence for a fundamental and pervasive shift away from nature-based recreation. PNAS, 105, 2295–2300
- Ryan, R.M., Weinstein, N., Bernstein, J., Brown, K. W., Mistretta, L., & Gagné, M. (2010). Vitalizing effects of being outdoors and in nature. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 30, 159-168.
- Sommer, R. (2003). Trees & Human Identity. In S. Clayton & S. Opotow (Eds.). *Identity and the natural environment: The psychological significance of nature.* (179-204) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Roszak, T. (2001). *The Voice of the Earth: An Exploration of Ecopsychology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Phanes Press. – <u>Afterword:</u> <u>Ecopsychology Since 1992 (pp. 323-331)</u>

Wilson, N. W. et al. (2011) Branching Out: The Impact of a Mental Health Ecotherapy Program. *Ecopsychology, 3,* 51-57.

Supporting Texts (optional, not required)

Bekoff, M. (2011). Kids & Animals: Drawings From the Hands and Hearts of Children & Youth. http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/ArchitecturePlanning/discover/cent ers/CYE/Documents/kids and animals printable lowresolution.pdf

Blades, M. & C. Spencer, C. (2006). (Eds.), Children as Agents in Sustainable Development: The Ecology of Competence (pp. 199-216). New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Kahn, P. & Kellert, S. (2002). (Eds.), *Children and Nature*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Louv, Richard (2005). *Last child in the woods*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill
- Nash, R. (2001). *Wilderness & The American Mind* (4th Ed.). Yale University Press
- Orr, D. (1992). *Ecological literacy.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Sobel, D. (2008). *Childhood and Nature: Design Principles for Education*. Stenhouse Publishers

Thomashow, M. (2002). *Bringing the biosphere home: Learning to perceive global environmental change.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press