

**Course Syllabus**  
**Lewis & Clark College**  
**Graduate School of Education and Counseling**

**Course Name: Environmental Identity and the Ecological Self**

**Course Number: CPSY 501-01**

**Term: Fall 2016**

**Department: Counseling Psychology**

**Faculty Name: Patricia H. Hasbach, Ph.D.**

**Faculty Phone/Email: 541-345-1410/ [phasbach@lclark.edu](mailto:phasbach@lclark.edu)**

**Course Calendar & Meeting Times**

**Days:** Saturdays, September 10 & October 15, 2016

**Times:** 9:00am – 5:00pm

**Location:** York Graduate Center, Room 107

**Catalog Description:**

This course guides students toward self-reflection regarding identity and experience related to place, the natural world, and other species; and motivations for integrating ecological perspectives into academic, professional or advocacy work.

**Course Description:**

Ecopsychology is the field of inquiry concerned with the human-nature relationship. A basic tenet of ecopsychology is that our inner worlds and the outer world are intimately connected. As a species, we came of age embedded in the natural world, and that need for nature still resides in our bodies, minds, and spirit. A substantial body of scientific evidence demonstrates the physical and psychological benefits of interacting with nature. There is a growing interest in this area of psychology as we recognize the decreased presence of nature in our lives; the exponential growth of technology in daily living; and the awareness of global climate change and the role psychology has to play in addressing it. Ecopsychology recognizes that one of our central challenges of our time is to integrate our connection with nature with our scientific culture and our technological selves. This course guides students toward self-reflection regarding their environmental identity and their “sense of place”; it explores the motivations for integrating ecological perspectives into academic and professional work; and it addresses the interrelationship between human and planetary health and wellbeing.

**Course Structure**

- This one-credit course includes two in-person class sessions that are held on two weekend days one month apart.
- The course includes self-directed activities outside of the classroom sessions.
- During the class meetings, didactic presentations will be balanced by group exercises, outdoor activities, in-class student presentations, and video presentations.
- Course activities include readings from assigned text and articles, written work, reflection exercises, and in-class presentations.
- Each class meeting will include classroom time and outdoor activities on campus. Students should dress appropriately for the weather.

### **Course Goals:**

1. Gain a comprehensive understanding of Ecopsychology and be able to identify, articulate, and critique the leading theories, concepts, and issues within the field.
2. Develop an understanding of the impact of one's environmental identity on one's worldview, and recognize how one's worldview influences their vision for a sustainable society.
3. Develop a deeper understanding of the influence of the human-nature relationship on our mental health and physical well-being.
4. Gain a deeper understanding of various methods and practices of ecopsychology and begin to identify ways to integrate this work into one's academic and professional development.

### **Course Readings:**

This course has one required text (available at the LC bookstore and in various online venues such as Amazon.com). Additional readings will be made available during the course.

### **Required text:**

Kahn, P. H., Jr. & Hasbach, P.H. (2012). *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

### **Course Requirements:**

1. Full class attendance is required. Since class sessions are experiential and involve group process, there is no effective "make up" to class attendance.
2. Since this course is designed to be an interactive experiential exploration of Ecopsychology, students' participation in class discussions and activities are essential. If there are any questions or concerns regarding the participation in any particular experiential exercise, please notify the instructor. Class participation includes:
  - a. Informed discussion of reading assignments
  - b. Engagement in class activities and exercises
  - c. Personal reflections regarding in-class activities
  - d. Respectful and constructive feedback on peers oral and/or written work
3. Personal description paper
4. Reflection/process paper (2-3 pages of text, double spaced, plus references)
5. Self-directed exercises and journal entries during the mid-course month including:
  - a. Place Bonding Exercise and sharing of journal entries in some creative way
  - b. Screen Time/ Nature Time log and sharing summary with class
6. Final term paper (6-8 pages of text, double spaced, plus cover page and references)

### **Personal Description Paper – due prior to first class – by Thursday, 9/8/16**

Short personal description (2-3 paragraphs) of yourself (e.g., background and academic focus), your interest in and/or experiences with ecopsychology or related areas, and any goals you have for this course.

*Please email your personal description to the instructor as an attachment in a Word-compatible document.*

### **Reflection/ Process Paper – due Monday, 9/19/16**

Students will submit a 2-3 page reflection/process paper after the first weekend meeting. In this paper, you should engage with the main ideas in one or more of the assigned readings. You can also draw on class exercises and discussion from our first weekend meeting. Quote from critical passages in the articles to develop your ideas in a scholarly manner. Papers should be submitted in APA format with a cover page and references. Good grammar, spelling, and polished writing are important!

*Please email your paper to the instructor as an attachment in a Word-compatible document. Your paper with comments will be returned to you via email.*

### **Mid-course Exercise: Place Bonding – due Saturday, 10/15/16**

During the four weeks between our class weekend meetings, I would like you to develop a relationship with some special place in nature. This place may be a site in wild nature, in a local park, on campus, or any outdoor space you are drawn to.

Please go there at least once/week for the next several weeks (minimum 4 visits). Go there at various times of the day and in different weather conditions. I would like you to write a journal entry each time you visit your special place. Here are a few suggestions for your journaling:

1. How do you feel in this place? What state of mind arises in you here?
2. What is the nature of your relationship with this place?
3. How do you experience, if at all, healing in this place?
4. What are some of the relationships you observe in this place?
5. What sensations do you notice when you are here?
6. What do you feel compelled to write about when you are in this special place?

Please bring your journal entries with you to our second weekend class meeting. You will be asked to read or share in some creative way, one entry with the class.

*Please turn in a copy of all your journal entries to the instructor. You may email the entries to the instructor by Friday, 10/14/16 or turn in hard copies by Saturday, 10/15/16.*

### **Mid-course Exercise: Screen Time/ Nature Time Log – due Saturday, 10/15/16**

During the period between our weekend meetings, I would like you to choose one week (7 days) and log the time you spend interacting with digital technology and interacting with nature. Please log time you spent in front of a technological screen (TV, movie, computer, cell phone, iPad, tablet, etc.) Record date, type of technology, activity, amount of time spent. For the same period, please record the time you spend outdoors in nature, noting date, location, activity, amount of time spent)

*Please turn in a hard copy of your screen time/ nature time logs to the instructor on Saturday, 10/15/16.*

### **Final Term Paper – due Friday, 11/4/16**

Students will submit a 6-8 page (plus a cover sheet and references) final term paper. This research paper explores a topic related to an application of ecopsychology, environmental identity, or sustainability that you are passionate about or would like to deepen your understanding about. Students should reference assigned readings and draw on professional journal articles, book chapters, and resources beyond assigned class readings. Please clear your topic with the instructor prior to beginning your paper. The

paper should be prepared in APA format. Grammar, spelling, and typos matter! Papers turned in late will lose credit.

*Please email your final paper as an attachment in a Word-compatible document to the instructor. Your paper will be returned to you electronically with comments.*

### **Evaluation and Assessment:**

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 papers and presentations that are clear, thoughtful, and tied to the themes of the course. B+ and B papers and presentations will be missing one or more of these elements. Course participation grading will also follow this format.

### **Grading:**

97-100 = A+

93-96 = A

90-92 = A-

87- 89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77- 79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

Class participation – 10 pts

Personal Description Paper – 5 pts

Reflection /Process Paper – 15 pts

Place Bonding Journal/Sharing – 15 pts

Screen Time/ Nature Time Log – 10 pts

Final Paper – 45 pts

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE**

*Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or marital status and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws.*

### **SPECIAL NEEDS/ ACCOMMODATIONS**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability and/or you have emergency medical information to share please make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible.

### **CPSY DEPARTMENTAL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

**The following schedule will help you organize your reading assignments for this course. Please come to class meetings prepared to discuss the readings assigned. Additional readings may be added by the instructor during the course.**

**Prior to the First Weekend Meeting:**

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Introduction: Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species  | Kahn & Hasbach |
| Ch. 1 The Topophilia Hypothesis: Ecopsychology Meets Evolutionary Psychology | Sampson, S.    |
| Ch. 3 What is Ecopsychology? A Radical View                                  | Fisher, A.     |

**Prior to the Second Weekend Meeting:**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Ch. 6 Ecovillages: information Tools and Deeply Sustainable Living | Nathan, L. |
| Ch. 10 Beauty and the Brain  | Sewall, L. |
| Ch. 11 Sacred Geography  | Davis, W.  |

**Articles:**

Tarnas, R. (1998) The great initiation

Richtel, M. (2010) Outdoors and out of reach, studying the brain