

Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2023
Previous Value Autumn 2022

Course Change Information

What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)

We are submitting this course for inclusion in the Lived Environments Theme in the New GE.

What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?

GEOG 3800 "Geographical Perspectives on Environment and Society," is about how people relate to the natural environment. This course is grounded in a geographical perspective, which emphasizes the multiple ways that humans and nature are always entangled, and it focuses especially on the interrelationship between ideas about and actions toward nature and race.

What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?

(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?

None.

Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request? No

Is this a request to withdraw the course? No

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area	Geography
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org	Geography - D0733
College/Academic Group	Arts and Sciences
Level/Career	Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog	3800
Course Title	Geographical Perspectives on Environment and Society
Transcript Abbreviation	Environ & Society
Course Description	Geographical understanding of interactions between society and environment; how historical and contemporary views of the environment influence people's actions toward the environment and other people.
Semester Credit Hours/Units	Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course	14 Week, 12 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course	Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component?	No
Grading Basis	Letter Grade
Repeatable	No
Course Components	Lecture
Grade Roster Component	Lecture
Credit Available by Exam	No
Admission Condition Course	No
Off Campus	Never
Campus of Offering	Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Exclusions

Previous Value

Not open to students with credit for qtr. crs. GEOG 430

Electronically Enforced

No

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code

03.0103

Subsidy Level

Baccalaureate Course

Intended Rank

Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

Required for this unit's degrees, majors, and/or minors

General Education course:

Human, Natural, and Economic Resources; Lived Environments

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Previous Value

Required for this unit's degrees, majors, and/or minors

General Education course:

Human, Natural, and Economic Resources; Social and Behavioral Sciences

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Students can describe key concepts, recurring themes, and important authors and thinkers in enduring debates about human-nature relations in geography and beyond
- Students can compare these ideas and approaches in terms of their content and their historical-geographical context
- Students can identify implications of different ideas and approaches for real-world human-nature relations
- Students can apply concepts to identify and understand human-nature relations in contemporary life

Previous Value

Content Topic List

- History of human-environment relations
- Human-Environment interaction in Geographic thought
- Cultural Ecology
- Preservation and Conservation
- Modern Environmentalism
- Sustainable development
- Radical environmentalism
- Political ecology

Sought Concurrence

No

Previous Value

Attachments

- Syllabus-SP23-prelim.pdf: Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Grandey, Mary Allison)
- GE-lived-environments-GEOG3800.pdf: Lived Environments Submission Form
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Grandey, Mary Allison)
- 3800-revisions-cover-letter.docx: Revisions Cover Letter
(Cover Letter. Owner: Grandey, Mary Allison)
- Syllabus-SP23-prelim-updated.pdf: Revised Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Grandey, Mary Allison)

Comments

- Revised syllabus and cover letter with explanation of revisions attached per panel feedback. *(by Grandey, Mary Allison on 07/28/2022 09:09 AM)*
- Please see Panel feedback email sent 07/15/2022. *(by Hilty, Michael on 07/15/2022 01:20 PM)*
- This course was grandfathered into the new GE Foundations (at the dept's request). A course cannot be both a Foundation course and a Theme in the new GE. Please choose one or the other. *(by Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal on 06/14/2022 12:58 PM)*

COURSE CHANGE REQUEST
3800 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette
Chantal
07/28/2022

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Grandey, Mary Allison	06/10/2022 10:58 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Ettlinger, Nancy	06/10/2022 10:59 AM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	06/14/2022 12:59 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Grandey, Mary Allison	06/14/2022 01:45 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Ettlinger, Nancy	06/14/2022 01:47 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	06/14/2022 02:05 PM	College Approval
Revision Requested	Hilty, Michael	07/15/2022 01:20 PM	ASCCAO Approval
Submitted	Grandey, Mary Allison	07/28/2022 09:10 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Ettlinger, Nancy	07/28/2022 09:11 AM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	07/28/2022 09:40 AM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Cody, Emily Kathryn Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin, Deborah Kay Hilty, Michael Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Steele, Rachel Lea	07/28/2022 09:40 AM	ASCCAO Approval

28 July 2022

This cover letter outlines the revisions I have made to the proposal to include GEOG 3801 in the GE Lived Environments theme, based on comments sent on July 15.

- **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty kindly request that all the GE Theme: Lived Environment Goals and ELOs be added to the course syllabus (and can be found on the Office of Academic Affairs website here: <https://oaa.osu.edu/ohio-state-ge-program>), as this is a requirement of all GE Theme courses.

The syllabus now includes all the goals and ELOs for the Lived Environments theme. Please see page 2 of the updated syllabus.

- **Contingency:** The reviewing faculty ask that more information and an explanation be provided in the course syllabus regarding how the course readings help contribute to this course being an advanced study of the GE Theme: Lived Environments. Additionally, they would also like to see bibliographic material on the course readings.
 - While they recognize and thank the course proposer for the readings listed in the current course calendar, they are requesting more information on the readings to help evaluate whether this course will be an advanced study of the GE Theme: Lived Environments.

In addition to listing the readings in the course calendar, there is also a list of the readings at the end of the syllabus, which includes the titles, sources, and length (page or word count). See pages 8-9 of the syllabus. I added a note at the beginning of the course calendar directing the reader to this list; see syllabus page 5.

I added explanation in the section of the syllabus on the GE about how the course readings contribute to this course being an advanced study of the Lived Environments theme. See syllabus page 3: the middle paragraph of the section "How the course meets these objectives" is newly added.

Sincerely,
Becky Mansfield

Environment and Society, Geog 3800, SP 2023 (#-Lecture)

Tuesday and Thursday 11:10AM - 12:30PM, in person in Derby Hall 1080

Professor Becky Mansfield, faculty member in the Department of Geography

See the course Carmen for all information and course materials. If you need assistance with Carmen, please contact OSU Tech Help and Support: <https://ocio.osu.edu/help>, 614-688-HELP (4357)

CONTACT INFORMATION

You can contact me for many reasons including:

- *You have questions* about course material, assignments, or grades or you need an extension
- *You are having difficulties* that prevent you from engaging fully in the course, whether those are related to health (including mental health), work, family, or anything else
- *You want to learn more* about course material or about opportunities beyond the course, e.g., research, internships, careers, other courses

Contact me by:

- Sending a message via Carmen (best), by email (mansfield.32@osu.edu), or by phone (614-247-7264). I will get back to you within 24 hours on weekdays (but I am unlikely to get back to you at all over the weekend).
- Talking to me directly. My office hours are immediately after class (12:30-1:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays) or we can arrange an in person or zoom meeting for another time. My office is 1054 Derby Hall.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about how people relate to the natural environment, asking a series of questions that help us think about both social and environmental issues. Are humans separate from nature, or are they a part of it? Can humans ultimately control the natural world? Does the natural world determine the course of human history? How are ideas about differences among people—for example, ideas about race and gender—related to ideas about nature, and vice versa? What does social inequality have to do with human-environment interactions—and vice versa, what do human-environment interactions have to do with issues of social inequality, such as racism? Does solving environmental problems require us to change how we think about nature?

This course grounds exploration of these questions in a geographical perspective, which emphasizes the multiple ways that humans and nature are always entangled. The course provides historical perspective and addresses how ideas about humans and nature have changed very recently, in what is now known as the “Anthropocene.” The course focuses especially on the entangled emergence of ideas about *nature* and *race* and the implications for a range of social and environmental issues today.

The course format includes lectures, small group discussions, and large group discussions. There is an assignment associated with almost every class meeting (see below for descriptions). There are no exams.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students can describe key concepts, recurring themes, and important authors and thinkers in enduring debates about human-nature relations in geography and beyond
2. Students can compare these ideas and approaches in terms of their content and their historical-geographical context
3. Students can identify implications of different ideas and approaches for real-world human-nature relations
4. Students can apply concepts to identify and understand human-nature relations in contemporary life

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

For students who started at OSU AU2022 or later, this course meets the requirements of the “new” GE. Goals and expected learning outcomes (ELOs) for all themes:

GOAL 1: Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations.

ELO 1.1 Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.

ELO 1.2 Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.

GOAL 2: Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

ELO 2.1 Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.

ELO 2.2 Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

Goals and ELOs for the *Lived Environments* theme:

GOAL 1: Successful students will explore a range of perspectives on the interactions and impacts between humans and one or more types of environment (e.g. agricultural, built, cultural, economic, intellectual, natural) in which humans live.

ELO 1.1 Engage with the complexity and uncertainty of human-environment interactions.

ELO 1.2 Describe examples of human interaction with and impact on environmental change and transformation over time and across space.

GOAL 2: Successful students will analyze a variety of perceptions, representations and/or discourses about environments and humans within them.

ELO 2.1 Analyze how humans’ interactions with their environments shape or have shaped attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors

ELO 2.2 Describe how humans perceive and represent the environments with which they interact.

ELO 2.3 Analyze and critique conventions, theories, and ideologies that influence discourses around environments

For students who started at OSU prior to AU2022: This course meets the requirements of the “old: GE for Social Sciences: Human, Natural, and Economic Resources, for which there are three learning objectives:

1. Students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the study of the use and distribution of human, natural, and economic resources and decisions and policies concerning such resources.
2. Students understand the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in individual decisions and societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts.
3. Students comprehend and assess the physical, social, economic, and political sustainability of individual and societal decisions with respect to resource use.

How the course meets these objectives:

The course meets this range of objectives by teaching you about key concepts, recurring themes, and important authors and thinkers in enduring debates about how people relate to the natural environment. This course is grounded in a geographical perspective, which emphasizes the multiple ways that humans and nature are always entangled, and it focuses especially on the interrelationship between ideas about and actions toward nature and race. You will learn to describe and compare diverse ideas and approaches to human-nature relations, as well as to identify the implications and trade-offs of different human-nature relationships and representations of them. You will learn to assess environmental decisions through a series of assignments in which you will apply course concepts to real-world human-environment issues.

The course readings contribute to this variety of course goals and encourage advanced, scholarly exploration by providing overview of key concepts (serving as a text) and examples (serving as a reader and requiring critical reading skills). Contemporary readings are primarily by academic authors, whether chapters written for an academic audience or essays written for wider audiences. Readings also include excerpts of primary texts from their historical era, and you will learn scholarly methods for engaging these texts.

The fundamental skill you are learning in this course is to interpret everyday examples of human-nature interactions by putting them in historical and geographical context and understanding implicit as well as explicit aspects of them. The goal is to help you recognize that circumstances in the here-and-now are not isolated but are part of geographically and temporally extensive patterns and processes. Recognizing these patterns and processes is especially important in foundational concepts such as race and nature, which are at the heart of multiple present day big challenges, from climate change to racial justice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND MATERIALS

**The materials for all assignments are provided at no cost in Carmen.

Read and post (30% of your final grade): On average *once per week* (15 total over the semester) you will do a set of readings and provide a written response (1-2 paragraphs). The readings include a variety of articles, book chapters, and reports, drawn from multiple sources. Some of these assigned materials provide facts and ideas to know (as a text), while others provide examples to think about and interpret based on course ideas (as a reader). The specific readings are listed in the Course Schedule, with a detailed reading list (including the length of the readings) at the end of the syllabus.

These assignments are for you to learn basic course material, to practice summarizing key concepts,

and to reflect on your reactions.

Activities (30% of your final grade): Once or twice *per unit* (7 total over the semester) you will do a short, related activity (e.g., watch a film, research a non-governmental organization) and provide a written analysis (1-2 pages). You will view and comment online on other students' work.

These assignments are for you to identify the real-world implications of course concepts, and to practice applying them to interpret contemporary phenomena.

Summary and application (40% of your final grade): At the *end of each unit* (5 total over the semester) you will do a two-part assignment. First (instead of exams), you will respond to prompts about the core material for the unit (1-2 pages). Second, you will do a new activity that builds on the work you already did in that unit's Activities, in which you apply course concepts to new material (3-5 pages). We will dedicate in-class time to discuss these projects.

These assignments ask you to synthesize material to compare key concepts, identify their implications, and apply them. You will also practice writing for different audiences.

Attendance and Participation (0% of your grade: serves as extra credit). Everyone is expected to participate actively by attending class, joining discussions, doing in-class activities, and so forth.

I do not assign a participation grade but use it to bump your grade if you are on the cusp of a higher grade at the end of the semester. For example, if you have 89.7 but were an active participant, you will get an A- in the course instead of B+. The bump can range from a half to one full point.

GRADING POLICIES

Grading: I grade all assignments on a 5-point scale: 5=excellent; 4=good; 3=passable; 0=missing or completely misses the mark. Rarely will I give a grade of 1 or 2. I limit my use of half points.

Final grade cut-offs: A 93%, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 55

Late policy: You can have extra time on assignments *if you communicate with me before the due date*. If you do not communicate before the due date, your grade will *lose one half point (out of 5) for every day it is late*. But see below: see me if you are having problems and we may be able to work something out.

Talking with other students on assignments: You may talk with other students when doing assignments, but the analysis and writing must be yours. I will question any assignments that are very similar. Failure to follow these guidelines will be considered academic misconduct.

PLEASE SEE ME IF YOU ARE HAVING PROBLEMS THAT PREVENT YOU FROM MEETING COURSE REQUIREMENTS. WE MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Readings are listed in-brief here and a full reference list is included at the end of the syllabus

Day	Date	Topic	To do before class
Unit 1: Nature, race, and environmental justice			
Tu	Jan 10	Introductions	Read the syllabus and post an introduction (due by the end of the day)
Th	Jan 12	Nature and Race	Read and post Pollan 2015 (New York Times Opinion) Miles 2019 (New York Times Opinion)
Tu	Jan 17	Continued	Activity: Personal narrative and place
Th	Jan 19	Environmental Justice	Read and post Goldman Prize on Margie Richard (website, including embedded video) Choose one from a list of recent articles
Tu	Jan 24	Continued	Summary and Application: Landscape analysis of a place meaningful to you
Unit 2: Colonial views of nature and humans			
Th	Jan 26	Beyond exposure: race and nature	Read and post Purdy 2015 (The New Yorker) Staples 2018 (New York Times Opinion)
Tu	Jan 31	Worldviews: Nature and Humans	Read and post Merchant 1992 (book excerpt) Soper 1995 (book excerpt)
Th	Feb 2	Continued	Activity: Dr. Seuss's <i>The Lorax</i> 1972 (film, 30 min)
Tu	Feb 7	Colonial context: intertwining of race and nature	Read and post Voyles 2015 (book excerpt)
Th	Feb 9	Continued	Activity: Interpretation of Taylor Swift's <i>Wildest Dreams</i> 2014 (video, 4 min)
Tu	Feb 14	Continued	Summary and Application: Popular culture
Unit 3: Environmental awakening (1850-1950s) and its legacies			
Th	Feb 16	19C environmental awakening: Preservation and Conservation	Read and post Benton and Short 2000 (book excerpt) Marsh 1864 (book excerpt)
Tu	Feb 21	Continued, with focus on racism	Read and post: Stern 2005 (book excerpt)
Th	Feb 23	20C Ecology and Culture	Read and post Leopold 1949 (book excerpt) Robbins 2004 (book excerpt)
Tu	Feb 28	Continued	Activity: <i>Ancient Forests: Rage over Trees</i> (documentary, 1989; first 30 minutes)
Th	Mar 2	Traces / legacies	Summary and Application: <i>The Goddess and the Computer</i> (documentary, 1988; first 30 minutes); compare with <i>Ancient Forests</i>

Unit 4: Modern Environmentalism (1960s-2000s)			
Tu	Mar 7	1960s: Industrialization and Population	Read and post Dowie 1996 (book excerpt) Carson 1962 (book excerpt) Ehrlich 1969 (book excerpt)
Th	Mar 9	Continued	Activity: Interpretation of Environmental Org. 1
	Mar 14, 16	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES	
Tu	Mar 21	1980s: Sustainable Development, Deep Ecology, Political Ecology	Read and post Mansfield 2009 (excerpt) The Ecologist 1993 (book excerpt) Devall and Sessions 1986 (book excerpt)
Th	Mar 23	Continued	Summary and Application: Interpretation of Environmental Org. 2; compare with Org. 1
Unit 5: 21 st Century Anthropocene environmentalisms			
Tu	Mar 28	What is the Anthropocene?	Read and post Hersher 2021 (NPR) Davis and Todd 2017 (academic article excerpt) Cronon 1994 (chapter excerpt)
Th	Mar 30	Continued	No new assignment
Tu	Apr 4	Sparing vs. Sharing?	Read and post Pearce 2018 (Yale Environment 360) Wilson 2016 (Aeon) Buscher and Fletcher 2016 (Aeon)
Th	Apr 6	White nationalist environmentalism	Read and post Stern 2019 (The Conversation) Aton 2022 (Energy & Environment News)
Tu	Apr 11	Inclusive Black environmentalisms	Read and post Sengupta 2020 (New York Times) Greenlee 2021 (New York Times)—featuring Columbus TikTok star Alexis Nelson! Stone and Mills 2021 (Photo essay, New York Times) Moynihan 2022 (New York Times)
Th	Apr 13	Continued	Activity: Find an inspirational human-nature relation
Tu	Apr 18	Presentations	Summary & Application: Present your inspiration
Th	Apr 20	Presentations/Summing up	Summary & Application: Present your inspiration

DISABILITY SERVICES

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

OSU COUNSELING AND CONSULTATION SERVICES

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student’s ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of these conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life’s Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

DIVERSITY

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity

of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

HARASSMENT

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu.

READING LIST WITH LENGTHS

Listed in order from the Course Schedule

Lengths are in words for web-based materials and pages for readings from books

Pollan, M. 2015. Why 'Natural' Doesn't Mean Anything Anymore. *The New York Times*. 1600 words

Miles, T. 2019. Black Bodies, Green Spaces. *The New York Times*. 1900 words

Goldman Prize on Margie Richard. <https://www.goldmanprize.org/recipient/margie-richard/> 1300 words plus 6-minute embedded video

On Environmental Justice: Choose one from a list of recent articles, each about 1500 words

Purdy, J. 2015. Environmentalism's Racist History. *The New Yorker*. 1300 words

Staples, B. 2018. The Racist Trope That Won't Die. *The New York Times*. 850 words

Merchant, C. 1992. Science and Worldviews, chapter 2 of *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World*. 19 pages

Soper, K. 1995. Excerpt from *What is Nature? Culture, Politics, and the Non-Human*. 8 pages

Voyles, T. 2015. Preface and parts of chapter 1 of *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country*. 29 pages

Benton, L. and J. Short. 2000. Excerpt of chapter 4 of *Environmental Discourse and Practice*. 14 pages

Marsh, G.P. 1864. Excerpt of *Man and Nature*. 6 pages

Stern, A. 2005. California's Eugenic Landscapes, chapter 4 in *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*. 26 pages

Leopold, A. 1949. The land ethic (excerpt). 6 pages

Robbins, P. 2004. Excerpt of Cultural Ecology, chapter in *Companion to Cultural Geography*. 6 pages

Dowie, M. 1996. Excerpt of *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century*. 6 pages

Carson, R. 1962. Excerpt of *Silent Spring*. 6 pages

Ehrlich, P. 1969. Excerpt of *The Population Bomb*. 5 pages

- Mansfield, B. 2009. Excerpt of Sustainability, chapter in *Companion to Environmental Geography*. 4 pages
- The Ecologist. 1993. Excerpt of *Whose Common Future? Reclaiming the Commons*. 5 pages
- Devall, B. and G. Sessions. 1986. Excerpt of *Deep Ecology*. 11 pages
- Pearce, F. 2018. Sparing vs Sharing: The Great Debate Over How to Protect Nature. *Yale Environment* 360. 2000 words
- Wilson, E.O. 2016. Half of the Earth must be preserved for nature conservation. *Aeon*. 3200 words
- Buscher, B. and R. Fletcher. 2016. Why E O Wilson is wrong about how to save the Earth. *Aeon*. 1500 words
- Stern, A. 2019. White nationalists' extreme solution to the coming environmental apocalypse. *The Conversation*. 900 words
- Aton, A. 2022. Buffalo shooting suspect embraced 'eco-fascist' label. *Energy & Environment News*. 500 words
- Sengupta, S. 2020. Black Environmentalists Talk About Climate and Anti-Racism. *The New York Times*. 1000 words
- Greenlee, C. 2021. How Black Foragers Find Freedom in the Natural World. *The New York Times*. 2100 words
- Stone, C. and J. Mills 2021. Bringing Black History to Life in the Great Outdoors. *The New York Times* (Photo essay)
- Moynihan, C. 2022. A Birder Is Back in the Public Eye, Now on His Own Terms, *The New York Times*. 900 words

GE THEME COURSES

Overview

Courses that are accepted into the General Education (GE) Themes must meet two sets of Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs): those common for all GE Themes and one set specific to the content of the Theme. This form begins with the criteria common to all themes and has expandable sections relating to each specific theme.

A course may be accepted into more than one Theme if the ELOs for each theme are met. Courses seeking approval for multiple Themes will complete a submission document for each theme. Courses seeking approval as a 4-credit, Integrative Practices course need to complete a similar submission form for the chosen practice. It may be helpful to consult your Director of Undergraduate Studies or appropriate support staff person as you develop and submit your course.

Please enter text in the boxes to describe how your class will meet the ELOs of the Theme to which it applies. Please use language that is clear and concise and that colleagues outside of your discipline will be able to follow. You are encouraged to refer specifically to the syllabus submitted for the course, since the reviewers will also have that document. Because this document will be used in the course review and approval process, you should be *as specific as possible*, listing concrete activities, specific theories, names of scholars, titles of textbooks etc.

Accessibility

If you have a disability and have trouble accessing this document or need to receive the document in another format, please reach out to Meg Daly at daly.66@osu.edu or call 614-247-8412.

Course subject & number

GEOG 3800: Geographic Perspectives on Environment and Society

General Expectations of All Themes

GOAL 1: Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than the foundations.

Please briefly identify the ways in which this course represents an advanced study of the focal theme. In this context, “advanced” refers to courses that are e.g., synthetic, rely on research or cutting-edge findings, or deeply engage with the subject matter, among other possibilities. (50-500 words)

GEOG 3800 “Geographical Perspectives on Environment and Society,” is about how people relate to the natural environment. This course is grounded in a geographical perspective, which emphasizes the multiple ways that humans and nature are always entangled, and it focuses especially on the interrelationship between ideas about and actions toward *nature* and *race*.

The course is more advanced than the foundations for several reasons. First, students learn about a range of ideas about and approaches to human-nature relations, especially within environmentalism, and focuses on implications for both social and environmental issues today. Second, it provides historical perspective and addresses how ideas about humans and nature have changed very recently, in what is now known as the “Anthropocene.” Third, by focusing on race and nature the course requires students to integrate across social and environmental domains that are often held apart. Fourth, the course requires students to apply these ideas to understanding real world examples, some that I provide and some that they must find themselves.

ELO 1.1 Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

The fundamental skill that students are learning in this course is to interpret everyday examples of human-nature interactions by putting them in historical and geographical context and understanding implicit as well as explicit aspects of them. The underlying goal is to produce citizens who recognize that circumstances in the here-and-now are not isolated but are part of geographically and temporally distal patterns and processes. Recognizing these patterns and processes is especially important in foundational concepts such as race and nature, which are at the heart of multiple present day big topics, from climate change to racial justice.

This is evident across the learning goals of the course, the first three of which address being able to describe, compare, and identify the real-world implications of key concepts, recurring themes, and important authors and thinkers in enduring debates about human-nature relations in geography and beyond (see the syllabus). Course goal 4 extends this further: “students can apply concepts to identify and understand human-nature relations in contemporary life.”

The emphasis on critical thinking (including interpretation of implicit ideas and understanding historical legacies) is evident in the structure of topics in the course. There are five units, the first of which (“Nature, race, and environmental justice”) introduces students to the course themes, focusing on contemporary examples. The next four are arranged chronologically, starting with “Colonial views of nature and humans,” which emphasizes the common origins of our ideas about nature and race. This is followed by three units that explore ideas about nature and race across the history of environmentalism: “Environmental awakening (1850s-1950s) and its legacies,” “Modern environmentalism (1960s-2000s),” and “Currents in Anthropocene environmentalism.”

The emphasis on application of critical thinking is also evident in the assignments, of which there are three types. “Read and post” assignments (average 1/week) ask students to summarize a set of readings and provide their own reactions. They then build on this skill in the “Activities” (1-2 per unit) and “Summary and Applications” (1 at the end of each unit). In the Activities, students are provided a representation of human-nature relationships to interpret using the course concepts associated with that unit. In Summary and Applications (S&A) students synthesize the material across the unit to write a summary of the key concepts in their own words—and then use that knowledge to provide a longer, more in-depth interpretation of an example of human-nature relationships in the world. The Activities and S&A assignments for each unit are linked; not only do the Applications building on the Activity, but each unit has its own theme. For example, in Unit 2 (on colonialism) students look at human-nature representations in popular culture (the 1972 version of *The Lorax*, the video for Taylor Swift’s *Wildest Dreams*, and an advertisement of their choosing), while in Unit 4 (on modern environmentalism) they focus on prominent environmental organizations (The Nature Conservancy, Rainforest Action Network).

ELO 1.2 Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

This course provides a deep dive into ideas about nature, including ideas about natural difference among humans. Students learn a geographical perspective on human-environment relations, which has several premises. First, humans and nature are always already intertwined (they are not separate entities) and so

ideas about the separation need to be explained. Second is a commitment to addressing environmental and social problems, especially those related to inequality. Third is a conceptual framework grounded in spatial and temporal interconnections: the local and the present are never isolated. Students use this geographical perspective to understand a range of human-nature relationships that themselves might start from very different premises (e.g., ones that posit a separation between humans and nature).

Students are introduced in the first days of the semester to the idea that “nature” is a complex concept with many meanings. We follow up on that throughout the semester drawing on geographers, environmental historians, and others who have studied ideas about nature across time and space. Students are introduced to scholarly fields such as environmental history and political ecology, and scholarly concepts such as socionature, naturalization, and Anthropocene.

Students learn these foundational concepts through lectures and related readings (the Read and Post assignments). For example, early in the semester I lecture about the foundational ideas of environmental justice, the students read and watch a short video about key figures in environmental justice movements (Robert Bullard, Margie Richard), and read news articles that provide examples of contemporary EJ problems. This introduces students to one way that race and environment are interconnected. We then build on that throughout the semester, focusing on issues such as stereotypes about environmentalists, the racist environmental determinism of colonial encounters, eugenics in early conservation, racism in neo-Malthusianism, the ongoing dismissal of the concerns of people of color as “special interests” (which posits the concerns of white people as universal), and new forms of Black and Indigenous environmentalisms.

The assigned readings include excerpts of primary texts from their historical era, going back to the work of George Perkins Marsh from the 1860s; students must learn scholarly methods for engaging these texts. The rest of the readings are primarily by academic authors, whether chapters or essays written for wider audiences in venues such as the New York Times, the Conversation, or Aeon.

In the almost 20 years that I have been teaching this course, I have never had a student tell me that this is material that they knew very well, and the majority have said they knew nothing at all about these topics. Even if aspects have been covered in other courses (for example, many have heard of 19th century debates about preservation and conservation), they say the approach in this course is completely different. What they learn is not common knowledge; it is a scholarly approach that is then applicable in everyday life, regardless of their field of study and career direction.

GOAL 2: Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.

ELO 2.1 Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.

Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

The first learning goal for this course is that students can *describe* concepts, themes, and thinkers regarding human-nature relations, the third goal is that they can *identify the implications* of them in real examples, and the fourth is that they can *apply* the concepts to *identify* them in action in the world.

Each of the five units of the course concludes with a “Summary and Application” assignment that requires students to *synthesize* material across the unit into a short essay and then apply their knowledge to a specific example. As stated in the syllabus, “*These assignments will ask you to synthesize material to*

compare key concepts, identify their implications, and apply them.”

For example, the S&A assignment for Unit 2 (colonial history) asks students to write about dualist views of nature, the domination of nature, and the implication of these ideas for ideas about difference among humans; they are then to apply these course concepts to identify ideas about nature in a recent advertisement of their choosing, writing a formal persuasive essay. The S&A assignment for Unit 3 (environmental awakening 1850-1950) asks students to write about preservation, conservation, and ecological thinking, including how they would identify them in real world examples outside the historical context in which these ideas developed; they are then to apply these course concepts to compare two environmental documentaries from the 1980s that demonstrate how these ideas persist. In the final S&A, students are asked to synthesize their knowledge across the semester to identify a human-environment relationship that they find inspiring and to explain—using course concepts—what is inspiring about it.

In the last week of the semester, we spend time in class (in small groups and as a whole) looking back over the semester to identify key themes and threads, helping students synthesize and consolidate their knowledge about human-nature relationships. I ask them what from the course will remain with them in the future.

ELO 2.2 Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

The prompts for each of the Read and Post assignments includes not just a summary but a reflection, asking students for their reactions and thoughtful responses. As stated in the syllabus, “*These assignments are for you to learn basic course material, to practice summarizing key concepts, and to reflect on your reactions.*”

Learning goal 4 is that students will be able to apply concepts to better understand the world around them, and students are asked to do this in the Activity and S&A assignments. Several of these assignments are specifically designed for students to bring in their own interests and experiences, allowing them to do self-assessment and build on prior experience. For example, the Activity and S&A assignments for Unit 1—kicking off the semester—ask students to write about their own relationship to nature, to identify a place that is meaningful to them and to represent it in pictures and writing, and to then do some more research on the spatial and historical context of that place, reflecting on it using our initial course concepts. We follow up on this as part of the in-class semester wrap-up in the final week of the course, when students reflect on how their ideas about nature and human-nature relationships have changed as a result of taking this course.

Specific Expectations of Courses in Lived Environments

GOAL 1: Successful students will explore a range of perspectives on the interactions and impacts between humans and one or more types of environment (e.g. agricultural, built, cultural, economic, intellectual, natural) in which humans live.

ELO 1.1 Engage with the complexity and uncertainty of human-environment interactions. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

GEOG 3800 “Geographical Perspectives on Environment and Society,” is about how people relate to the natural environment. This course is grounded in a geographical perspective, which emphasizes the

multiple ways that humans and nature are always entangled. It focuses especially on the interrelationship between ideas about and actions toward *nature* and *race*: e.g., racial disparities in relationship to environmental problems and solutions; racism in environmentalism; and ways the very idea of “nature” and the idea that humans can be divided into natural “races” are intertwined in the history of colonial power relations.

As expressed in course goals 1 and 2, students will learn to describe and compare a wide range of ideas and approaches to human-nature relationships. This complexity is expressed in the topics of the course, for example in the range of environmentalisms (in the plural) that the course covers in Units 2, 3, and 4, from preservation and conservation to sustainable development to current debates about geoengineering.

Students learn about and practice summarizing these ideas in lectures and Read and Post assignments, and then compare across them both in small group discussions and the Summary parts of the Summary and Application assignments. For example, after being introduced to ideas about Sustainable Development, students are asked in small groups to identify how older ideas are (or are not expressed). They might comment, for example, on similarities to conservationist notions about environmental management, or about neo-Malthusian ideas about the role of population. Later in the semester, learning about the more contemporary Half-Earth proposal, students might comment on similarities both to 19th century preservation and to mid-20th century ecological approaches, including their exclusionary dimensions. This helps students recognize both continuity and change over time.

ELO 1.2 Describe examples of human interaction with and impact on environmental change and transformation over time and across space. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

The entire course is about human interaction with and impact on environmental change and transformation over time and space. This is evident in all course goals and course topics: they are all about human-nature interactions through a geographical lens that emphasizes change (and continuity) over time and space, linking the here-and-now to extensive patterns and processes.

The course engages specifically with *environmentalisms* since the mid-1800s, with a comparative approach regarding how they each understand the causes of environmental change and solutions to environmental problems. This comparative approach does not just catalogue differences but asks students to think about the wider implications of these different approaches for addressing environmental and social problems. By focusing specifically on ideas about nature and about human difference, students come to see that at issue is not just that “humans” damage “nature,” but that there are a wide range of human-nature relationships, many of which are missed (or even dismissed) when universalizing the human. This is one way the course demonstrates how social issues and environmental issues are intertwined.

These themes are the topics of all the assignments, as already described. For example, in Unit 2, on colonial histories, one Read and Post assignment has students read excerpts from the book *Wastelanding*, on US encroachment on Navajo land from the mid-1800s, and how the destruction of land and people was justified in terms of settler ideas about proper nature, people, and environmental management. In Unit 3, on Modern environmentalism, one Read and Post assignment has students read an excerpt from Rachel Carson’s 1962 *Silent Spring* and compare it with an excerpt from Paul Ehrlich’s 1968 *Population Bomb*. The Activities in this unit ask students to view the current websites of The Nature Conservancy and Rainforest Action Network, to look for how these ideas (and others) are (or are not) expressed: what is it this organization does and how is it situated in the broad landscape of approaches to understanding and addressing environmental change (including how the organization incorporates social dimensions)?

While some in-class time is dedicated to lecture—to provide basic definitions and background—most of it

is dedicated to small and large group discussions that build on the students' assignments. What did they take from readings? What is their take on the materials provided in the Activities and the Applications? They compare in small groups and then we share and discuss with the larger group (where I can also fill-in gaps and address misunderstandings). In these discussions students are encouraged to simultaneously apply course concepts and bring their own reactions. They are encouraged to use their growing knowledge to develop their own perspectives on human-nature relationships.

GOAL 2: Successful students will analyze a variety of perceptions, representations and/or discourses about environments and humans within them.

ELO 2.1 Analyze how humans' interactions with their environments shape or have shaped attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/ assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

The course focus on changing ideas about nature, humans and human difference, and human-nature interactions is fundamentally a focus on attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors. As the course goals state, students will be able to describe, compare, and understand the implications of “key concepts, recurring themes, and important authors and thinkers in enduring debates about human-nature relations in geography and beyond.”

While this is often about how humans perceive and represent the environments with which they interact (see next response), the course also focuses on how interactions with environments shape attitudes, beliefs, values, and behavior. This is the main theme of Unit 2 of the course, on colonial histories. This unit is primarily about European and American colonists' encounters with strange-to-them people and places and how they made sense of those encounters in ways that led to their domination, through interlocked ideas about “nature” and “race.” Throughout the course we also look at other human-environment relationships that have shaped very different attitudes and behaviors, for example the Navajo human-land relationships that were violently disrupted by US colonial incursion (as mentioned in the previous response), Balinese human-land relationships that were misunderstood by development experts seeking to modernize water management for irrigation, or how African colonial and post-colonial experience shape very different perceptions of the Anthropocene.

Students are also asked to reflect on their own attitudes, beliefs, and values. They offer their own reactions to the readings. They provide their own interpretation in the Activities and Applications. Students are encouraged to share their perspectives during daily class discussions. At the end of the semester, they are asked to reflect on what they have learned, including how their own attitudes and beliefs about nature and race have changed.

ELO 2.2 Describe how humans perceive and represent the environments with which they interact. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

While the aim of the course is to understand material consequences in terms of environmental change and racial inequality—and the barriers to addressing these problems—the approach of the course is to ground this in perceptions, representations, and discourses about nature and race that shape and are embedded in different human-nature relationships. The course focuses on environmentalisms because these are often explicit about their understanding of human-nature relationships and because they aim to address environmental problems. Unit 1 introduces students to these ideas from the very beginning, starting with two articles by public intellectuals on ideas about nature (by Michael Pollan) and about race and nature (by Tiya Miles).

The Activities and S&A assignments then require students to identify attitudes about nature, race, human difference, human-nature interactions in representations of human-nature relationships—whether that representation is a music video (Wildest Dreams, set in an unnamed African Savannah), an environmental documentary (e.g., Rage Over Trees, about controversies over logging in the Pacific Northwest), or a news article (e.g., about approaches to water management of the Los Angeles River).

As described in the response to General Expectations ELO 2.2, the Activity and S&A assignment for Unit 1 asks students to represent a place of their choosing—a place meaningful to them—using concepts covered in the first couple weeks of the course.

ELO 2.3 Analyze and critique conventions, theories, and ideologies that influence discourses around environments. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Course goal 2 is that students can compare ideas and approaches while course goal 3 is that they can identify the implications of them. Comparing and identifying implications are foundational to analysis and critique of ideas.

Starting with Unit 2, students not only compare and contrast ideas and approaches, but seek to understand how ideas from the past live on in later ideas—even when not immediately obvious. This is especially so with ideas about race, which are often implicit and, for dominant approaches, racist. Students learn how it is that many forms of environmental thought (including environmentalisms) reproduce the very problems that they seek to address. In learning to identify dominant conventions and ideologies—as well as to identify already existing but overlooked or dismissed alternatives—students grapple with ways to foster more positive, beneficial, environmentally friendly and just human-nature relations, for themselves and the world around them.

Interpreting in order to critique (problematic approaches) and promote (beneficial approaches) is what they practice in the Activities and Applications assignments. While we seek positive examples throughout the course, this is the explicit focus toward the end, when we look at new forms of Black environmentalisms that are explicitly anti-racist and inclusive, as well as in the final Application assignment, which asks students to write about a human-nature relationship (or representation of it) that they find inspiring.