WST 4349, Green Consciousness, 3 credits, Fall 2013

Wednesday, 1-3:50
Professor Jane Caputi
Office: CU 229: phone: 561 297-3865; jcaputi@fau.edu.
Office hours: M, T, W, 4-6 p.m. and by appointment.
I reserve the right to change the syllabus as needed as the semester progresses.

In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now. -- Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, 2005

Course Description: In this class we will look at modern environmentalist perspectives on American identities-- values, attitudes and practices toward Nature (which includes non-human and human nature) -- as these are formed and influenced, not only by our now globalized national experience, but also by our understandings and experiences of gender, class, sexuality and race, learning and incorporating the perspectives of both ecofeminism and environmental justice. We consider founding figures of global import like Rachel Carson as well as current leaders, including Wangari Maathai, and examine specifically American ideas and their “green” implications, including individualism, property rights, consumerism, bodies, food, birth, death, sexuality, the nature of animals, and the place of humans in the given world. We will pay particular attention to the ideas and practices of Native American cultures. We also will look at how contemporary popular culture transmits concepts through symbolic stories, including the green themes in Shrek and the “zombie apocalypse” story so prevalent in contemporary media. As we examine the values, attitudes and practices that mark the contemporary American environmental experience, the hope is that you gain an understanding of how and why our society is sustainable or not, how we make choices that impact the environment and how our attitudes and actions, from the most everyday to those on the largest scale, affect humans as well as animals and other elements of non-human nature. We will have local activists from various organizations visit our class. Some of you might want to work with their organizations (or other local organizations) to fulfill an optional Academic Service Learning assignment for this class. ADVISORY: Guest speakers have been invited because they represent a range of environmentalist perspectives and activist orientations. Their presence does not indicate an endorsement of their politics, perspectives or actions. They are visiting in order to further educate you about the range of environmentalist approaches.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop critical thinking and writing skills.
2. To explore environmentalist consciousness and worldviews as these are expressed in selected scientific, spiritual and religious writings, popular culture productions, literature, and political writing and community activism.
3. Students become active learners, learning from a variety of methods as well as from each other.
4. to introduce students to the possibility of reciprocity between what you are learning and how to apply this beneficially in your community. You can do this through an optional (10-20 hour) academic service-learning component of the course. If you do, in consultation with me, you will contact an appropriate organization to set up your component.

Course Evaluation: This is a WAC, writing intensive course. All writing assignments should be submitted through Blackboard SafeAssign. You will be asked to perform a number of varied writing assignments, all graded except for an self-evaluation of your progress in writing and critical thinking skills at mid-semester and at the end of the semester. Note: Students can substitute an Academic Service Learning Project for the final take-home exam. See below for description of this option. The paper you write to accompany that project also will be 3 pages and be worth 20% of your grade.

1. First take-home exam. 3 pages (minimum). Due Oct. 2. You will have a choice and answer one question, using ideas and information from class lectures, readings, and films. Be sure to make clear, direct, relevant and meaningful references to readings and other class materials in this and every assignment or you will lose credit (20%).
2. Second take-home exam. 3 pages. Due Nov. 6. (20%)
3. Third take-home exam: 3 pages. Due: Dec. 4. (20%)
4. Longer Essay Project (6 pages, 40%): The purpose of this assignment is to give you practice in articulating clear thesis questions and/or statements, organizing supporting materials and arguments, drafting and then finalizing an 6-page essay. You will work up to this project in a series of 3 assignments. Due: First, Oct. 16, you will turn in a 1-page proposal, providing your thesis question or statement, followed by several paragraphs describing the ideas you will be engaging, the questions you will be asking, and the limits or scope of your inquiry. Include an initial bibliography of the books and articles from class that you are using as well as at least two outside sources (books not websites) as well as relevant websites. You will get this back from me with comments and suggestions for revision. After completing the revisions, if necessary, I will approve your topic (5%). Next, Oct. 30, you will then turn in a draft of your 6-page essay, for my comments and suggestions for revision. You also will share a draft (into which you have incorporated changes based on my comments) with other students in a small group session in the Nov. 6 class to obtain peer feedback. Then, taking all of these comments into consideration, undertake a further revision of the paper before handing it in to me (35%) on Nov. 13.
5. Self-evaluation. At mid-semester (10-16) and at the end of the term (12-4) you will write a one-page self-evaluation of your writing and critical thinking
skills, problems you have encountered, how you have dealt with them, and progress you have made.

WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE

This writing intensive course serves as one of two "Gordon Rule" classes at the 2000-4000 level that must be taken after completing ENC 1101 and 1102 or their equivalents. You must achieve a grade of "C" (not C-minus) or better to receive credit. Furthermore, this class meets the University-wide Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) criteria, which expect you to improve your writing over the course of the term. The University’s WAC program promotes the teaching of writing across all levels and all disciplines. Writing-to-learn activities have proven effective in developing critical thinking skills, learning discipline-specific content, and understanding and building competence in the modes of inquiry and writing for various disciplines and professions.

If this class is selected to participate in the university-wide WAC assessment program, you will be required to access the online assessment server, complete the consent form and survey, and submit electronically a first and final draft of a near-end-of-term paper.

Midterm Conferences

You will each meet with me at mid-semester. During your mid-semester meeting, I would like to hear you talk in detail about how you feel your reading and writing practices have changed during the course so far. That is, we will discuss where you were as a reader and writer when you entered this course, where you are now, and where you would like to end up.

To prepare for these conferences, please read through all of the work you've done for this class, including all of the drafts of the papers you have written. Write a description (about a page) on how you think your papers thus far show your capacities as a critical reader, thinker, and writer. Quote passages from what you have written. Show problems and how you have corrected them. Show ways that you have ably demonstrated these skills and your growth. Are you happy with your performance in class and what you have been learning? Would you like to see yourself do more? Are you capable of more? These notes will provide the basis for the discussion that we have in conference. When you come to the conference, please bring both the writing you've done evaluating your written performance, the written evaluation of your class performance, and your class portfolio. This folder or notebook should include everything you've done this term.

Comments on class so far: The last thing I'd like you to do is to think about how the class has been going. Please jot down on a separate sheet of paper whatever ideas you have about things you would like to see more of, less of, done differently, or remain the same. Jot down any questions that come to mind that you'd like to see the class discuss. Don't put your name on these. I'll just ask you to toss them in a pile. I'll collect all of these statements and questions and offer them up for class discussion.
Requirements for End of Term Self-Evaluation

Please type, 1-2 pp. The purpose of this self-evaluation is to get you to reflect critically on all the work you have done this semester and to present your best work for the term. It should include the following:

- a description of what you have accomplished this semester, highlighting your successes and quoting from your work;
- an explanation of why you have chosen the papers you have chosen to represent your work for the quarter;
- references to your midterm conference in which you discussed the goals you still needed to accomplish for the quarter (make sure to describe what you have accomplished and what you still need to work on);
- point out what you want me, as your reader, to pay attention to as I read your portfolio; and
- Any other comments or discussion that you think is important as a final statement for the term.

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING STATEMENT:
Due to the nature of the course content, this course is designated as an “academic service-learning” course. The assistance you provide to the agency/organization during your service-learning experience is a service to the community and will allow you to apply knowledge from the course to local, national, and/or global social issues. Throughout this course you will be participating in service-learning activities while demonstrating civic engagement at campus, local, national, and/or global community levels. You will also reflect on your service-learning experience and the impact on the community as well as your professional development. To receive academic service-learning notation of hours on your transcript, your hours must be logged electronically through Noble Hour, https://www.noblehour.com/from_sweatmonkey, while completing your academic service-learning project. Also, pre-assessment and post-assessment surveys through Noble Hour are required to be taken by academic service-learning students. Please visit the Weppner Center for Civic Engagement & Service website, www.fau.edu/volunteer, for instructions on how to log hours through SweatMonkey and the links for the surveys. Once your hours have been approved and both surveys have been completed, you will receive an academic service-learning notation on your transcript.

If you choose the A-S-L option, to complete the A-S-L project, you must work for at least ten hours with an agency or educational group performing meaningful academic service; some suggestions are listed below. You must notify me of your intent to do this by Jan. 25. Your subsequent assignment, after the service is completed, is to write a 3-page reflection paper on this experience, considering the impact the academic service-learning experience has had on your professional development, its benefit to the community and its relation to course objectives. To elaborate: Your
paper must speak to the connection between class content and objectives and the meaningfulness of the academic service activity you have performed, making direct references to class readings. You also will consider how this academic service-learning assignment contributed to your increased environmental awareness and other course objectives as well as your awareness of the ways that you can become civically engaged to address problems and issues around environmental justice and sustainability. **You will write this 3 page paper as a substitute for the final take-home exam.**

At FAU, a student can do an A-SL project with the Mission Green Student organization (which you can join on Facebook). They plan an Earth Day event. There also is a community garden with which you could get involved. If you are interested, tell me and then contact Jill Rosen, LEED AP, Florida Atlantic University. Assistant Director OSUA/Sustainability Liaison P: (561)297-4110, jrosen58@fau.edu

**Possible External Academic Service Learning Opportunities:**

- **Slow Food, Glades to Coast**, [www.slowfoodgladestocoast.org](http://www.slowfoodgladestocoast.org). Lead visits to local farms, visit schools to present information
- **The Sierra Club**, [florida.sierraclub.org/GAC.asp](http://florida.sierraclub.org/GAC.asp). The Group Advisory Council is looking for those who have skills in the areas of Fundraising, Outings, Recruitment of Volunteers, Leadership and Political Training, and Electronic Newsletters.
- **Environmental Coalition of Miami and the Beaches**, [http://www.ecomb.org/](http://www.ecomb.org/) Volunteer for activities such as helping organizing educational seminars and beach clean-ups.
- **Earthfirst.org** Earth First describes one possible project: “The Earth First! Journal Collective is starting an online review section on its newswire website and is looking for submissions that analyze, critique, smash or praise, books, films, music, etc. Either the angle of the review or the subject of the media source should have some relevance to ecological issues. For instance, you could review a kids’ book like *Hoot*, a novel, a documentary about water use issues in India, or big Hollywood deals like Avatar. They could be humorous or serious. It would be a chance to get some publishing cred, even if only online. Particularly well written pieces could be published in the quarterly Journal. Check out the Earth First! Newswire: [www.newswire.earthfirstjournal.org](http://www.newswire.earthfirstjournal.org)” [http://www.evergladesearthfirst.org/home.htm](http://www.evergladesearthfirst.org/home.htm)
- **The Annie Appleseed Project**, [www.annieappleseedproject.org](http://www.annieappleseedproject.org). a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation, provides information, education, advocacy, and awareness for people with cancer and their family and friends who are interested in complementary or alternative medicine (CAM) and natural therapies from a patient’s perspective. Students can help with educational activities in researching and disseminating information on environmental impacts on cancer as well as organizing events.
- **Highland Beach Turtle Rescue**, students can take a mandatory 3-hour educational training session on sea turtle behavior and the practice of nest marking and monitoring. Students also will participate with more extensively trained participants in
walking the beach to mark nests and keep records. Contact Dr. Roger Messenger at messenge@fau.edu

Classroom Etiquette Policy: In order to enhance and maintain a productive atmosphere for education, personal communication devices, such as cellular telephones and pagers, are to be disabled in class sessions.” Please come on time to class and do not leave except at the break (except in an emergency). I will take attendance and may enhance your grade as I choose based on attendance. If you have over four absences I may lower your grade by one degree (e.g., a B to a B-).

Disability policy statement
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodation due to a disability to properly execute course work must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880) – and follow all OSD procedures.

Code of Academic Integrity policy statement
Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations at http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf.

Required Reading List

Books:

Required Articles and excerpts (All materials are under “content” on blackboard site or on the Internet, as indicated)


Avery, Byllye and Hunt, Mary, “‘Natural Resources,”’ In *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*. Edited by Carol Adams, Continuum, 1993, 281-294.


Principles of Environmental Justice, 1991


Websites to visit for class:

http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/dec/07/why-rachel-carson-is-a-saint

http://www.wellcomecollection.org/whats-on/exhibitions/superhuman/the-future-of-humanity.aspx#prettyPhoto%5Bflash%5D/5/

http://lib.asu.edu/librarychannel/2011/05/16/ep114_littlebear/

http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/aug/16/nature-economic-security


http://www.ourstolenfuture.org/

http://www.ewg.org/ environmental working group (toxins in cosmetics, etc.)

http://www.evergladesearthfirst.org/home.htm

http://www.aspca.org/fight-animal-cruelty/farm-animal-cruelty/what-is-a-factory-farm.aspx
http://www.meat.org/

http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/

Weekly Class Schedule  (Complete readings for the day on which they are scheduled. All viewings will be in class:

August 28: Introduction: View: Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring;
Sept. 4: Read: Lytle; Carson, excerpt from Silent Spring
Sept. 11: Some basic concepts: Leopold, Starhawk, Hanh, Principles of Environmental Justice; Bullard, Evans
Sept. 18: More basic concepts: Merchant, Ruether; Mathews
Sept. 25: Ecological Pornography. Read: Welling; Shiva; (two articles). FIRST TAKE HOME EXAM POSTED
Oct. 9: Bodies and Sexuality: Allen, Scott; Bordo, Di Chiro, Morales-Levin
Oct. 16: More on Bodies: Read: Claire. ONE PAGE PROPOSAL FOR YOUR ESSAY DUE.
Oct. 30: Food: Rudy, Adams. View: Food Inc. (excerpts) FIRST DRAFT OF YOUR ESSAY DUE. SECOND TAKE HOME EXAM HANDED OUT.
Nov. 6: Alternative world views: Hogan, Dwellings SECOND TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE. WE WILL GO OVER YOUR DRAFTS OF ESSAY IN CLASS.
Nov. 20: Ownership: Consumerism, Read: Kimmerer. View: The Story of Stuff
Nov. 27: Global Activism. Read: Maathai
Dec. 4: New Bright and Dark Green ideas, Kingsnorth; Mathews (again) FINAL TAKE HOME DUE, ALTERNATELY YOUR SERVICE LEARNING PAPER

Grading Criteria:

In assigning your grade, I ask myself the following set of questions:

1. Does the work respond to the specific assignment and actually answer the particular question or problem posed?
2. Does it incorporate direct references to class materials and enter into a dialogue with these materials, showing me that you understand them and can work with them.
3. If a research paper, does it have a clearly stated thesis and adequate supporting material? If the answer is to a take-home essay exam, does it make ample use of relevant class readings and materials?
4. Is the work free from long (or even short) quotations and summaries that remain unanalyzed and are not put into context? Is there a clear flow of ideas in the writing?
5. Is the work free from basic grammatical and sentence structure errors?

If the answer to any of these questions is a “no,” the paper cannot receive higher than a C+ or its numerical equivalent. More than one “no” results in a lower grade.

The other factors I consider in grading include:

1. Is the paper thoughtful and original?
2. Is it appropriately complex and interesting in its approach to the topic?
3. Is it well organized? Does it have a point and stick to it? Are there transitions and good flow among the ideas? Is it “finished,” like a poem or work of art can be if it is good? In other words, does it come to a full conclusion or does it simply stop?
4. Is there a lively, intelligent, interesting and thoughtful voice informing the writing?