

COURSE DESCRIPTION
PHILOSOPHY 367-01
ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY
FALL 2002
WEDNESDAY 6:20-9:00

Instructor: Prof. John Clark **Office:** Stallings 125 **Tel.:** (504) 865-2128
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Office Hours: MTuW 5:15-6:15 and after classes. I'm also in my office most mornings and afternoons. Please call for appointments.

Texts: Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, Or, Life in the Woods* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995). ISBN 0-486-28495-6.
Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999). ISBN0-06-095302-0.
Gary Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990). ISBN 0-86547-454-0.
David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1996). ISBN 0-679-77639-7.

General Description: The goal of this course is to deepen the student's reflection on the concepts of nature, ecology, and environment, and on the relationship between the person, humanity and the natural world. We will investigate concepts of nature and of humanity's place in nature in Western thought, in Eastern traditions and in indigenous cultures. Our discussion will focus on four works this semester. The first is Thoreau's *Walden*, one of the classics of American philosophy and nature writing. Thoreau challenges us to rethink not only the relationship between humans and nature, but also our concepts of the person, civilization, wildness and freedom. The second work, Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, is a contemporary classic of nature writing that focuses not only on the most marvelous, sublime and inspiring aspects of nature, but also on natural phenomena that are grotesque, alienating and disturbing. Gary Snyder's *The Practice of the Wild* develops the theme of the connection between wildness, freedom, and creativity, and explores the contributions of Asian traditions such as Daoism and Buddhism to our thinking about nature. Finally, David Abram in *The Spell of the Sensuous* discusses such topics as our embodied being, the nature wisdom of indigenous peoples, and the connection between nature and language.

Class Discussions: Classes will consist of detailed discussion of issues in ecophilosophy, based on our readings. It is important that all assigned readings be completed before the classes for which they are assigned. In order that you might participate effectively in the discussion, it is suggested that you keep a journal or notebook in which you record your reactions to the readings as you read each assignment. Your entries might address questions such as the following: 1) What are the most important things you learned from the reading and why do you consider them to be important? 2) What points in the reading did you find to be questionable, misleading or erroneous? 3) What important questions does the reading raise for you and why are they important? These journals are for the purpose of class preparation and will not be submitted for evaluation. However, at the beginning of each class discussion each student will be asked to comment on the assignment for the day, and it is suggested that you use journal entries for this purpose.

Paper: The major project for the semester will be an essay of about 20 pages on the topic: "The Place of Humanity in Nature." In your essay you should discuss what you see as the most important aspects of the human relationship to nature (physical, biological, psychological, spiritual, moral, metaphysical, etc.). You should focus on the most significant aspects of this relationship that are overlooked in naive, everyday, uncritical thinking. Obviously, this is a very open-ended assignment. Your work will be judged by: 1) the thought and reflection exhibited in your discussion; 2) your originality and use of your imagination; and 3) your specific, detailed and knowledgeable use of the readings for the course; 4) your use of other ideas that you may have encountered through other courses, readings, additional research, or your experience in general; and 5) the quality (clarity, coherence, eloquence and formal correctness) of your writing. Express your own ideas, but to whatever degree possible make reference to issues, concepts, insights and theories in our readings and class discussions. A strong paper will not only express your own views well, but also show detailed knowledge of the content of the course, and bring in other relevant ideas that you have encountered. Please note that a progress report will be submitted at midterm. This report should include a significant amount of written material, so that I can give you comments that may be helpful in your work on the final paper.

Grading and Attendance: Grades will be based on: 1) your comments on the readings, general class participation, and midterm progress report (50%); 2) the final essay (50%). Absence for more than 20% of the classes in a semester is considered excessive and will result in a one letter-grade reduction, as stated in the City College attendance policy.

City College Attendance Policy: "The City College faculty considers interaction with students crucial to the teaching and learning process. To help ensure a quality educational experience, the following policies govern class attendance:

If a student misses 20% or more of class meeting time, a one full letter grade reduction will be applied to the final course grade. Twenty percent of classes amounts to three (3) classes in a semester in the once a week format, six (6) classes in a twice a week format, two (2) partial sessions in an intensive weekend format (Friday evening and/or Saturday morning and/or Saturday afternoon) in a semester. If a student misses the first weekend of an Intensive Weekend class, the student must withdraw from the class. The foregoing attendance policy statements are minimum standards. Instructors have the right to exceed those standards and establish grade adjustments as warranted."

University Statement on Intellectual Honesty: "Intellectual honesty is simply acknowledging, through documentation, all those sources that the writer has used in preparing any written work. Plagiarism, the obverse of intellectual honesty, is the use of any form of material, whether written or verbal, without formal indebtedness through documentation. The paraphrasing of any work, either written by other students or found in print or in electronic form, without acknowledgement, is plagiarism. Not properly identifying the source of a quotation, even though the quotation is enclosed in quotation marks is also plagiarism. Not only the exact language of a sentence or phrase, but any material falsely presented as one's own--an idea, a concept, data, graphs, or a line of argument--constitutes plagiarism. Any material that neither originates with the student nor is common knowledge among educated persons must be formally acknowledged. It must be remembered that written work stands on its own, not on the intention of the writer. The burden of intellectual honesty rests on the student, not on the instructor. If students have any doubts about what is required, they should inquire before the work is submitted. Otherwise, they open themselves to charges of plagiarism. The penalties for plagiarism are severe: a student who is found to have plagiarized or to have assisted another student in plagiarizing may be given a failing grade for the course on the first violation; a second offense may result in exclusion or dismissal from the university." (Adapted from "Standards of Writing," City College, 1971. For the complete details on standards, penalties, and appeals procedures, see "Integrity of Scholarship and Grades," Loyola Undergraduate Bulletin)

Note: Grades at the end of the course can be found online at LORA. Please do not call for grades. Papers submitted at the end of the course may be found (with grades and comments) in the City College office in Stallings Hall after the grades are submitted. Please pick them up during the several weeks following that date.

ASSIGNMENTS

Aug. 28	Introduction
Sept. 4	<i>Walden</i> , Ch. 1 ("Economy," first two-thirds)
Sept. 11	<i>Walden</i> , Ch. 1 ("Economy," final third) & Ch. 2 ("Where I Lived and What I lived For")
Sept. 18	<i>Walden</i> , Ch. 5 ("Solitude") & Ch. 11 ("Higher Laws")
Sept. 25	<i>Walden</i> , Ch. 17 ("Conclusion") & <i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i> , Ch. 1 ("Heaven & Earth In Jest")
Oct. 2	<i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i> , Ch. 4 ("The Fixed") & Ch. 6 ("The Present")
Oct. 9	<i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i> , Ch. 8 ("Intricacy") & Ch. 10 ("Fecundity")
Oct. 16	<i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i> , Ch. 11 ("Stalking") and Ch. 15 ("The Waters of Separation")
Oct. 23	<i>The Practice of the Wild</i> , Ch. 1 ("The Etiquette of Freedom") & Ch. 2 ("The Place, the Region, and the Commons") Progress report on paper due.
Oct. 30	<i>The Practice of the Wild</i> , Ch. 4 ("Good, Wild, Sacred") & Ch. 5 ("Blue Mountains Constantly Walking")
Nov. 6	<i>The Practice of the Wild</i> , Ch. 7 ("On the Path, Off the Trail") & Ch. 9 ("Survival and Sacrament")
Nov. 13	<i>The Spell of the Sensuous</i> , Ch. 1 ("The Ecology of Magic") & Ch. 3 ("The Flesh of Language")
Nov. 20	<i>The Spell of the Sensuous</i> , Ch. 5 ("In the Landscape of Language")
Nov. 27	Holiday
Dec. 4	<i>The Spell of the Sensuous</i> , Ch. 7 ("The Forgetting and Remembering of the Air")
Dec. 9	Paper due.