

Skidmore College

Environmental Psychology

Course Syllabus, Fall 2002

PS212.003 (3 credits)

T & Th 9:40-11:00 am

Room: TLC301

*Our health is our sound relation to external objects,
Our sympathy with external being – Ralph Waldo Emerson*

*Let me get out in the hills again, I and myself alone
Out through the wind and the lash of rain, to find what we really own
Under the stars while a campfire dies, let me sit and look myself in the eyes – Clark Badger*

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Office Hours: Tue 11:00-12:30
Wed 2:00-3:30
and, of course, by appointment

Reading List:

- Anderson-Hanley, C. M. (1997). Adventure programming and spirituality: Integration models, methods and research. Journal of Experiential Education, 20(2), 102-108.
- Bell, P., Greene, T., Fisher, J., & Baum, A. (2001). Environmental Psychology, 5th Ed. NY: Harcourt-Brace, Inc.
- Durning, A. (1992). How Much is Enough? The Consumer Society and the Future of the Earth. NY: Norton.
- Gallagher, W. (1993). Saving the world (Chapter 15). The Power of Place. NY: HarperCollins.
- Miller, T. (1998). A cognitive approach to wanting what you have. Wanting What You Have: A Self-Discovery Workbook. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Quinn, D. (1992). Ishmael: An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit. NY: Bantam.
- Silverstein, S. (1964). The Giving Tree. HarperCollins.
- Helgesen, S. (2001). Chapter 2. Thriving in 24/7: Six Strategies for Taming the New World of Work. NY: The Free Press.
- Myers, D. G., & Diener, E. (1996). The pursuit of happiness. Scientific American, May, 70-72.

Additional Resources:

- www.apa.org (American Psychological Association)
http://web.uvic.ca/~apadiv34/ (APA's Division of Population and Environmental Psychology)
www.psychologicalscience.org (American Psychological Society)
www.psy.gu.se/iaap/envpsych.htm (International Assoc. for Applied Psychology, Div. of Envir. Psych.)
www.wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/sch_cas.psy/Career_Paths/Environmental/career09.htm (careers)

Catalog Description:

Environmental Psychology is a subfield of psychology. It covers the inter-relationship between humans and the physical environment (both natural and constructed). In this course we will examine the bi-directional relationship between the environment and our psyche: the effects of the environment on our behavior and experiences, and the effects of behavior on our environment. Topics will include: psychological theories and the environment; environmental perception and cognition; the dynamics of place; the effects of temperature, sound, light and spatial arrangements in neighborhoods, homes, schools and workplaces; mutual influences of human behavior and the natural environment; examination of educational and intervention efforts; and

other topics. The course will incorporate an inquiry-based learning component in which students will be able to experientially engage in the process of research (e.g., how psychological principles affect behaviors in environmental issues on campus and in Saratoga Springs).

Course Requirements:

You are responsible to read and understand, in full, the contents of this syllabus and to seek clarification as needed.

Email: I often communicate with individual students and the entire class via email. It will be important that you make sure your Skidmore email account is up and running and that you check it regularly or that you have your email forwarded to another account that you check regularly. This will help ensure that you are aware of any changes in requirements or scheduling. Please contact CITS (x5900) for assist in setting up your email or arranging forwarding.

Comment Papers: There are seven assigned comment papers due during the course of the semester (see schedule). These papers provide you the opportunity to reflect on readings that are unlike the text and prompt a more personal response. These will be useful in facilitating class discussion about the readings. Writing these will give you a chance to organize your thoughts. In these papers, you should not reiterate the reading, but respond to it. Better papers will attempt to address at least one of the following questions: What feelings are prompted in the reader? What **applications** (examples) can you think of from your life or the media that demonstrate or contradict a point made in the reading? Can you **integrate** the material with other things you have learned about in other classes, books, etc. Does this fit or contrast? What **implications** might the facts or opinions in the reading have for you, for Skidmore, for the world?

Papers should follow the following formatting guidelines: typed, single-spaced, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12-point font. In the left-hand corner on separate lines: your ID#, Environmental Psychology (PS212), Professor Hanley. Next line centered: "Comment Paper: " followed by the reading title. Skip a line and start your essay. Any citations and references should meet APA requirements for academic papers (see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, available in the psych dept office or the library, and see also our dept's advice on writing at: www.skidmore.edu/~hfoley/studentadvice.htm). For example:

There are certain similarities in the interactions Quinn has with Ishmael (1992), and the psychological principles described in our text as motivating humans' relationships with their environment (Bell, 2001). For example,...

If you feel compelled to make a direct quote, limit it to one quote per paper and the quote must be only a portion of a sentence. You must put a page number of the direct quote in your citation (see APA style). Points will be deducted for spelling errors, grammatical errors, incomplete or run-on sentences, etc. Please proofread carefully. Papers will be graded on the basis of completeness (addressed all aspects of the assignment), clarity, organization, viability of argument, critical thinking, etc. Papers not turned in at the beginning of class on the date due will receive a 10% (one letter grade) deduction (and -10% for each additional week late).

Be sure to stick to the above requirements (e.g., over one page or different size font will lose points) - I know this seems stringent, but in reality there are many times where you have to fit your thoughts into a limited space, in a certain style, etc. So, this is a good skill to practice (see me for examples of real-world submission forms for poster presentations at conferences, grant applications, etc.).

Do not be fooled into thinking that because these papers are short, you can whip them off without much thought. Concise writing can be challenging. These papers count for a significant proportion of your grade. Because the papers are brief, you will often need to write and revise several times to make concise, well-articulated and reasoned points. It may be helpful for some of you to access the resources on campus for improving writing (x4331; Ladd Hall 320)

Exams: Three exams will be given in class. These will be multiple choice and based on the readings, class presentations, and discussions. You are responsible to bring a #2 pencil to each exam. No make-up exams will be given.

Research Project: You will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with others to investigate some aspect of a current environmental issue on campus (i.e., the use and future of the North Woods). Early in the semester we will review prior research on the North Woods and commence a study to investigate some

psychological aspects of the environmental issue (perhaps perceptions of benefits and costs, restorative experiences, etc.). During the semester your group will meet periodically and will collect data from a particular “user” groups (e.g., bikers, dog-walkers, academic users, decision-makers, etc.). Mid-semester you will report in as to your group’s progress. Near the end of the semester, your group will be responsible to enter your data into an EXCEL spreadsheet and meet with me to review the results (more details will be forthcoming). At the end of the semester, your group will make a PowerPoint presentation of your data, analysis, conclusion, and recommendations, with each group member contributing to the presentation (practice ahead of time! eye contact, engaging voice, etc...). Each individual will also turn in a brief paper summarizing their groups’ findings and describing the experience of participating in research on environmental psychology (more details will be forthcoming).

Attendance Policy: Attendance at every class is in your best interest. Class time will incorporate lecture, exercises, demonstrations, and discussions that should not only be interesting, but should facilitate your learning. There is a traditionally a strong relationship between class attendance and grades. That is, students who attend class regularly tend to achieve higher grades. Prolonged personal illness or family crises should be brought to my attention and for special accommodations will require documentation from appropriate school officials. Attendance and participation will be used in calculating your course grade (see below).

Academic Honesty and Integrity:

The policies of Skidmore College regarding academic honesty and integrity are expected to be upheld and will be enforced as necessary. This includes: cheating (dishonesty in a test situation), plagiarism (dishonesty in presentation of materials in a paper or report, the extensive use of quotations and paraphrasing should not be used), and other abuses (see the college catalog for more details).

Grading:	Percent
3 Exams	30%
7 Comment Papers & Research Q	30%
Research Project (presentation * paper)	30%
<u>Attendance/Participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
	100%

The final course grade will be based on the cumulative percent score earned by each student as follows:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F	
100→	96→	93→	89→	86→	93→	79→	76→	73→	69→	66→	63→	
superior work			satisfactory work			poor quality work			failure, no credit			

Final notes:

Please **do not hesitate** to speak with me regarding any aspect of the course material or other questions or topics of interest to you. You’ve chosen a small college; take advantage of the fact that faculty are accessible! Remember that as your instructor, I am here to help facilitate your learning. If you do not let me know how things are going, I will not be able to assist you. It is your responsibility to prepare yourself to learn (*be rested, fed and read ahead of class*), and to speak up if you are having some difficulty. Remember, there are no “dumb” questions in college – you are here to learn!

What you get out of this course and college in general has a lot to do with what you put into it, so “*Carpe diem!*” That is, “*Seize the day!*”

I am available if you would like to discuss careers in psychology or if would like to discuss my clinical or research work in more detail. As an undergrad, I studied Biology and Mathematics. I did graduate work in environmental science and teaching. My masters’ degree is in school counseling and my doctorate is in counseling psychology. I have worked as a clinician and a researcher in the areas of geriatric psychology, health psychology and neuropsychology. I’d be happy to discuss any of these areas of psychology or help point you toward resources for other aspects of psychology. In addition to office hours, email is usually a very reliable way to reach me and you are also welcome to leave a message any time of day at my number above. Let’s have a great semester!

Tentative Course Outline

Week	Day	Date	Topic for Class	Assignments Due	Readings
1	Thur	9/5	The Why, What, and How of Environmental Psychology		Bell Chap 1
2	Tue	9/10	How the Environment Affects Our Behavior... Nature and Human Nature	wear outdoor/walking/sitting clothes...	Bell Chap 2
	Thur	9/12	Discussion on <u>The Giving Tree</u>	Comment Paper Due: <i>Impressions of The Giving Tree</i>	Silverstein
3	Tue	9/17	Guest: Professor Sue VanHook <i>A look at Skidmore's North Woods</i>		NWoods reading
	Thur	9/19	Review North Woods research small groups work	Complete North Woods Q	Anderson-Hanley
4	Tue	9/24	Environmental Perception & Cognition <i>Happiness video clips</i>	Comment Paper Due: <i>Pursuit of Happiness?</i>	Bell Chap 3 Myers article
	Thur	9/26	Theories of Environ-Behavior Relationships <i>Affluenza video clips</i>		Bell Chap 4
5	Tue	10/1	Discussion on Perceptions: Happiness & Affluence	Comment Paper Due: <i>How Much is Enough?</i>	Durning book
	Thur	10/3	Exam I		
6	Tue	10/8	Noise & Weather, Climate, and Behavior <i>Land of Plenty vs. Ozone Hole? (Psy in communic)</i>	Grp reports on North Woods proj	Bell Chap 5 & 6
	Thur	10/10	<i>Planning the North Woods Research Project</i> practice walk with S. VanHook		
7	Tue	10/15	Disasters, Toxic Hazards, and Pollution <i>Rachel Carson video clips</i>		Bell Chap 7
	Thur	10/17	Exam II		
8	Tue	10/22	How Our Behavior Affects the Environment... Our ecological footprints	Comment Paper Due: <i>Your Ecological Footprint</i>	see class handout
	Thur	10/24	Territoriality & Crowding The Population Bomb video clips		Bell Chaps 8&9
9	Tue	10/29	Discussion: Psyche & Effects on Environment The Dilemma of the Commons	Comment Paper Due: <i>Ishmael</i>	Quinn book
	Thur	10/31	Changing Behavior to Save the Environment Recycling video clips		Bell Chap 14
10	Tue	11/5	Interdependent: Environment & Behavior... Fostering Sustainable Behavior		" "
	Thur	11/7	Planning and Design For Human Behavior & Design in Built Environments		Bell Chap 11
11	Tue	11/12	Guest: Mirele Goldsmith, CUNY <i>Motivating a City to Build Green... + Grad School?</i>		Bell Chap 10
	Thur	11/14	<i>Residential Design - Smart Growth</i> video clips		Bell Chap 12
12	Tue	11/19	Exam III		
	Thur	11/21	Changing Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors... Work, Learning, and Leisure Environments		Bell Chap 13
13	Tue	11/26	An example - Valuing the Environment... <i>Waterwalker movie</i>	Comment Paper Due: <i>Thriving in 24/7</i>	Helgesen Chapter
	Thur	11/28	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving break		
14	Tue	12/3	Discussion: Full Circle... Envir-Psyche-Envir...	Comment Paper Due: <i>Waterwalker & Miller</i>	Miller Chapter
	Thur	12/5	NorthWoods working session	bring data in EXCEL file	
15	Tue	12/10	NorthWoods working session	review results & plan presentation	
16	Mon	12/16	*** FINAL EXAM ***	Group presentations on NorthWoods study	1:30-4:30, location TBA

(Note: tentative schedule - changes in required readings, topics, assignments, or exams may be made)