

PSYC 4V97
Ecological Psychology (Ecopsychology)
 2006/07 Winter Term

Instructor

Laurie Hollis-Walker (please call me Laurie)
 Office A 329, extension 5250
 905-517-8222 (cell, leaving a message is okay)
 Seminar: Wed 11am, MCB 201

Teaching Assistant

Carole Moss
 Office SC 309, extension 4195
 Seminars:
 Wed 3pm, EA107
 Thu noon, MCD 401

Office consultation for Carole and Laurie: Wed 10-10:50am (or by appointment)

Please do not send me (Laurie) a lot of emails. I do prefer face-to-face discussion and will be available during the break at lecture, after lecture, and during regular office time. I am also available for individual meetings by appointment. You may call my cell phone (it's only on when I'm available, but with voice message). You could also drop a note in my mailbox in the psychology department mailroom or just approach me in the hall if you see me. Carole, I understand is more welcoming of emails. She can be contacted at ombuds@busu.net

Required readings

Text: Winter, D. D., & Koger, S. M. (2004). *The psychology of environmental problems* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: Mahwah, NJ.

Other relevant readings assigned as found in course schedule. All readings will be provided in lecture (paper or .pdf files) or on reserve in the library.

Course overview

I am grateful to experienced teachers of ecopsychology who have provided me with copies of their own course syllabi, on which I have drawn for this syllabus. Some of these people are Sue Koger, Ph.D. and Deborah Du Nann Winter, Ph.D. (the authors of the textbook) and John Davis, Ph.D. This syllabus and course plan is a compilation of their work, integrated with my own research foci on individual and personality psychology and nonviolent activism.

My goals for this course are to engage you in crucial questions about human survivability and behavioral change in terms of ethical and effective responses to the current ecological crisis, to sponsor your foundational knowledge, sophistication, and creativity in forming questions for psychological understanding of and in answer to those questions, and to enhance your writing, emotional, and group skills as you do so. We will be reading important literature addressing the psychology of environmental problems, as well as experiencing some of its major insights.

Ecological psychology is the study of three broad issues: environmental perception, the effects of the environment on behavior and experience, and the effects of behavior on the environment. The emerging field of ecopsychology expands these interests, adding perspectives on the nonduality of humans and nature, positive emotions as sources of environmental action, and the integration of environmental principles into psychologically relevant social science investigation. It also offers a model of human nature that is equally grounded in natural processes and human experience and development. Ecological psychology and ecopsychology are informed by other fields and disciplines (e.g., environmental science, design, architecture, ethics,

and philosophy, ecological sustainability and action), thus this course applies psychological theory and research to environmental issues on multiple levels of analysis. Topics to be covered include overviews of current environmental and potentially related social issues and other relevant academic disciplines, in addition to examples of current empirical findings from psychological research in terms of our behaviors, beliefs, decisions, and values in relation to the responsibility we have for the human and non-human life with which we share this world. The course will focus on theories, methods, and assessment tools used by relevant perspectives in psychology that apply and have been applied to environmental issues. There will be a multiple level comparison of different theories and approaches and there will be a focus, also on the attainment of individual and collective, sustainable solutions.

The course will be lecture format, supported by slides, videos, and presentation of empirical research. There will be required readings for lecture and weekly seminars. I will encourage thinking and input from students and ask that you participate in this course through completion of tasks (e.g., library research, reading and reflection journal, one term paper, midterm and final exams, seminar leadership, participation, and discussion). The experiential aspects of the course are designed to make the concepts relevant to you as individual students and to foster your environmental and psychological health, thus the course format calls for a high degree of personal involvement from you in terms of reflection and critical analysis of your own behavior in relation to environmental problems, and in terms of a commitment to the application of sustainable, individual choices. I will be available for consultation at break during lecture, after lecture, and during a weekly office time.

Grading standards for this course are high, thus I will ask for critical listening and participation in lecture, scholarly discussion in seminar, and understanding of course material reflected in written work received. I recognize that some students will take this course primarily for personal interest. This is a worthy reason to take the course and I will support your learning as much as I can. However, if the grade you receive in the course is important to you, I expect you to demonstrate your understanding and performance in your work.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct

Plagiarism detection software will not be employed in this class. However, you should know that I am reading in the field now and thus am quite familiar with relevant available materials. I am aware that students do attempt to cheat and/or plagiarize and I believe these people make up a small proportion of the student body (I hope!). However, I take this issue very seriously when it does arise. If I find evidence of cheating, plagiarism, or academic misconduct, I will pursue the matter to the full extent of university guidelines. This is Brock's official statement on plagiarism:

“Because academic integrity is vital to the well-being of the university community, Brock University takes academic misconduct very seriously. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, which involves presenting the words and ideas of another person as if they were your own, and other forms of cheating, such as using crib notes during a test or fabricating data for a lab assignment. The penalties for academic misconduct can be very severe. A grade of zero may be given for the assignment or even for the course, and a second offence may result in suspension from the university. Students are urged to read the section of the Brock University Undergraduate Calendar that pertains to academic misconduct. Students are also reminded that the Student Development Centre (Schmon Tower, Room 400) offers

free workshops on writing and study skills and on avoiding plagiarism.” (From an email from David DiBattista, Associate Dean, Social Sciences, May 10, 2004.)

Please contact me if you have any questions about this policy. *Ignorance does not constitute a valid excuse for plagiarism or academic misconduct.*

Course requirements and evaluations

Component	Due date	Weight
Midterm take-home exam	Distributed Feb 4; due Feb 7	15%
Reading/reflection journal	Feb 28 interim, Apr 4 final	20%
Seminar leadership	One seminar	15%
Seminar/lecture participation	Every lecture and seminar	10%
Term paper	Beginning of last lecture, Apr 10 (snow)	20%
Final exam: multiple-choice	Apr 4, in lecture	5%
Final exam: take-home	Distributed Apr 15; due Apr 18	15%

Reading and reflection journal/portfolio (20%)

In this journal/portfolio include, at minimum one, short written comment per assigned reading — textbook and journal articles (maximum 1/2 page hand-written lines or < 250 keyboard-entered words per reading; approximately 5-8 full sentences, no point form please), all responses to experiential exercises completed in lecture and seminar, and additional material of your own creation. There will be some concrete suggestions available early in the term. Format to fit inside a 10”x13” envelope (provided), but other than that be as creative as you like (including poems, drawings, dream reports, photographs, flyers, songs, collages, etc.). I am looking for an account of your experience of the material you encounter in this course. What do you think of it? What is your response to it? Have you changed as a result of what you have learned? First person narrative is expected in this assignment and I hope you will offer your insights as a person and as a developing psychologist. Journals will be collected at midterm and feedback will be provided for your ongoing efforts.

You will draw from your personal portfolio for the final exam, as it will consist, in part of a brief synopsis of what you learned and how/if participation in this course has changed your environmentally relevant attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, feelings, and defenses. Please save all handouts and written work, drawings, feedback sheets, journal responses, etc. for possible inclusion in the portfolio. Given that the next 10 years are important as per many themes in this course, I ask you to organize the portfolio in a way that you believe would be interesting or useful for you to examine in 10 years. Only Laurie will see these journals and they will be graded according to feedback provided after midterm hand-in. For now, collect the materials with an eye for critical thinking, creativity, organization, and insight.

Journals are due 2007 Apr 10 (4:00pm); to be submitted through essay box in reception area of psychology department by 4:00pm; will be time and date stamped by administrative assistants. Journals will be graded and available for pick-up as of 2007 April 25 in Laurie’s office (MCB 201), four Wednesdays (i.e., Apr 25, May 2, 9, 16), from 9am to noon. I will be available at those times for consultation as well.

Midterm exam (15%)

Take-home format with 72 hours for completion and one question requiring integration of course material. Makeup exam by prior arrangement *and* with a medical note ONLY.

Seminar leadership (15%)

Each seminar has a theme. The assignment is to lead an excellent discussion in one seminar per term. More than one student will likely be responsible for each seminar, so you may work in pairs or as individuals (just don't repeat material, please). There should be some presentation of the theme material (e.g., powerpoint slides for an overview of the issues, debates), but the seminar should contain a healthy component of scholarly discussion, which you will facilitate. It's good to come prepared with stimulating, open-ended questions (i.e., there may not be an answer). Please do *not do* Jeopardy-type quizzes, as these have limited pedagogical value. Extra resources for each seminar are available upon request. Guidelines for effective discussion and participation follow seminar participation requirement (below). Your seminar leadership and discussion facilitation will be evaluated according to those guidelines, in addition to the content of your brief presentation of background material. Seminar leadership will be evaluated at end of each seminar for that specific seminar and then after the final seminar for all discussion leadership over the course of the term. Thus, in the spirit of fairness grades for seminar leadership will be announced with final exam and (unofficial) course grades (i.e., 2007 May 2).

Seminar (and lecture) participation (10%)

As a fourth year class, the expectation for scholarly, collaborative discussion during seminar means that you read the assigned article(s) or chapter for both lecture and seminar, make written comments on the journal articles (not chapters), and participate fully in lecture and seminar. The success of any class depends on student participation and alert presence, but seminars and discussion work in lectures especially depend on the contributions of every individual there. To seriously prepare for, initiate, listen to, and respond to our group learning is crucial for your own learning.

Behaviors that enhance group learning:

- Initiate ideas or questions
- Ask for or give information, reactions, opinions
- Clarify the reasoning of another member
- Ask for clarification
- Comment on the group's movement
- Demonstrate respect for others
- Be tough on ideas; soft on people
- Build on what other class members said
- Provide counter-arguments to strengthen ideas
- Express uncertainty about weak propositions
- Support, encourage, or help someone else
- Suggest a standard for evaluating an argument
- Relieve group tension with humor
- Make suggestions about procedure, use of time

Behaviors that detract from group learning:

- Show up late or not at all
- Wait for others to jump in
- Speak too often, or respond too quickly, so you keep others out
- Zone out, doodle, appear inattentive

Express hostility
 Use humor too often as a distraction
 Offer irrelevant points or repeat points that do not move the discussion along
 Interrupt rudely (occasionally polite interruptions can be effective)
 Insist on your point of view
 Talk just for the sake of saying something
 Ignore others who do not speak (instead of help find ways to include them)

Your evaluation for seminar and lecture participation will be based on the above two lists. Note that there will be times in lecture when the floor will be opened up for a discussion forum and your participation will be evaluated in the same way.

Term paper (20%)

A full description of the requirements for the paper will be distributed after the second lecture. Paper is due last day of lecture with a 5% late penalty per day. No extensions will be granted, except in *very* exceptional cases. Papers (and journals) will be graded and available for pick-up as of 2007 April 25 in Laurie's office, four Wednesdays (i.e., Apr 25, May 2, 9, 16), from 9am to noon.

Final exam (20%)

The exam format will be partially take-home (15%) and partially in-class multiple-choice (5%). The in-class multiple-choice portion will comprise 25 questions drawn from required readings and text chapters (all chapters, except chapter 8). Arrive to the final lecture prepared to write the multiple-choice portion for a period of 30 minutes, which will be followed by a break and then review for the take-home portion. The take-home portion will comprise one experiential (your experience) question and at least one theoretical and/or methodological question that will require integration of course materials (lectures, readings, video presentations). The take-home portion will be distributed by email on the Sunday following the final lecture (i.e., the morning of 2007 Apr 15). You will have 72 hours to complete the take-home portion and it must be submitted by 4:00pm on 2007 Apr 18 to the psychology department essay box in the main reception area (MCC block). These will be date- and time-stamped by the department administrative assistants and results will be posted within two weeks (i.e., by 2007 May 2).

Lectures, seminars, and assignments schedule

Week	Topics & readings
Week 01 2007 Jan 10	<p>What on earth are we doing? Introduction to course, assignments, seminars Video: <i>An Inconvenient Truth</i> Lecture reading: Winter & Koger text, Chapter 1, <i>Introduction</i> Seminar: No seminars this week.</p>
Week 02 2007 Jan 17	<p>Ecopsychology What it is and what it is not, multiple levels of analysis, overview of relevant perspectives, psychological constructs, other disciplines Lecture readings: Winter & Koger text, chapter 2, <i>Freudian Psychology</i> Seminar: Discussion of course themes, sign-up for seminar leadership Seminar reading: Adams, W. W. (2006). The Ivory-Billed woodpecker, ecopsychology, and the crisis of extinction: On annihilating and nurturing other beings, relationships, and ourselves. <i>The Humanistic Psychologist</i>, 34(2), 111–133.</p>
Week 03 2007 Jan 24	<p>Emotional reactions Personal meaning-making, concept of the Commons and the Greens, apathy, spirituality Lecture readings: Anderson, A., & Christie, D. J. (2001). Some contributions of psychology to policies promoting cultures of peace. <i>Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology</i>, 7(2), 173–185. Schmuck, P., & Vlek, C. (2003). Psychologists can do much to support sustainable development. <i>European Psychologist</i>, 8(2), 66–76. Kortenkamp, K. V., & Moore, C. F. (2001). Ecocentrism and anthropocentrism: Moral reasoning about ecological commons dilemmas. <i>Journal of Environmental Psychology</i>, 21, 261–272. Seminar: The Great Turning Seminar readings: van Gelder, S. R. (2000, Spring). The great turning: An interview with Joanna Macy. <i>Yes! A Journal of Positive Futures</i>. Positive Futures Network: Bainbridge Island, WA.</p>
Week 04 2007 Jan 31	<p>Sense of place Human-nature relationships, environmental values, and ethics, culture, social influences Lecture readings: Winter & Koger text, chapter 3, <i>Social Psychology</i> Winter & Koger text, chapter 4, <i>Behavioral Psychology</i> Cialdini, R. B. (2003). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 12(4), 105–109. Seminar: Tragedy of the Commons (Greens) Seminar readings:</p>

Week	Topics & readings Hardin, G. (1968, December). The tragedy of the commons. <i>Science</i> , 1243–1248. Ignatow, G. (2006). Cultural models of nature and society: Reconsidering environmental attitudes and concern. <i>Environment and Behavior</i> , 38(4), 441–61.
2007 Feb 04	Midterm exam (take-home) distributed via email
Week 05	Midterm exam due <i>before commencement of lecture</i>
2007 Feb 07	Individuals and individual differences Plurality of methods, why study the individual? Lecture reading: Casey, P. J., & Scott, K. (2006). Environmental concern and behaviour in an Australian sample within an ecocentric–anthropocentric framework. <i>Australian Journal of Psychology</i> , 58(2), 57–67. Seminar: Bioregionalism Seminar reading: Metzner, R. (1998). The place and the story: Ecopsychology and bioregionalism. <i>The Humanistic Psychologist</i> , 26(1–3), 35–49.
Kevin Arnno Jill Davey	
Week 06	Perception and physiological health effects
2007 Feb 14	Toxicity, restorative environment, Biophilia, sense of place revisited, radical ecopsychology Video: <i>Jane Goodall: Her life, her method, and her Earth ethics</i> Lecture readings: Winter & Koger text, chapter 5, <i>Physiological and Health Psychology</i> Frumkin, H. (2001). Beyond toxicity: Human health and the natural environment. <i>American Journal of Preventative Medicine</i> , 20(3), 234–240. Seminar: Conservator Society Seminar reading: Ehrlich, P. R., & Ehrlich, A. H. (2004). Sustainable governance in America. In <i>One with Nineveh: Politics, consumption, and the human future</i> (pp. 288–317). Washington: Island.
2007 Feb 16	Results of midterm exam posted outside Laurie’s office
Week 07	READING WEEK
2007 Feb 21	
Week 08	Interim collection of journals/portfolios <i>before commencement of lecture</i>
2007 Feb 28	Environmental citizenship: A case example The power of the individual Lecture reading: McAdams, D. P. (2006). <i>The person: A new introduction to personality psychology</i> (4th ed.), (pp. 153–55, 176–86). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. Seminar: Ecological Self as individual

- Week Topics & readings
Seminar reading:
Macy, J. R. (1995). Working through environmental despair. In T. Roszak, M. E. Gomes, & A. D. Kanner (Eds.), *Ecopsychology: Restoring the earth, healing the mind* (pp. 240–259). San Francisco: Sierra Club.
- 2007 Mar 02 Last date for withdrawal without academic penalty
- Week 09 **Environmental citizenship, Part I: Individuals**
2007 Mar 07 Ego development; generativity; agency; communion
Lecture reading:
McAdams, D. P., & Logan, R. L. (2004). What is generativity? In D. P. McAdams & E. de St. Aubin (Eds.) *Generativity and adult development: How and why we care for the next generation* (pp. 15–29). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
Seminar: **Environmental ethics and sense of place**
Seminar readings:
Lamb, K. L. (1996). The problem of defining nature first: A philosophical critique of environmental ethics. *The Social Science Journal*, 33(4), 475–486.
Roberts, E. J. (1998). Place and the human spirit. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 26(1–3), 5–34.
- Week 10 **Environmental citizenship, Part II: Agents of change**
2007 Mar 14 Citizen engagement; mediation/collaboration; alternative voices; activism
Lecture readings:
Shepherd, N. (2002). Anarcho–Environmentalists: Ascetics of late modernity. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 31(2), 135–157.
Dukes, E. F. (2004). What we know about environmental conflict resolution: An analysis based on research. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 22(1–2), 191–220.
Seminar: **Ecotopia**
Seminar readings:
Featherstone, C., & Forster, P. M. (2000). The health needs of elders within an intentional community. *Community, Work & Family*, 3(1), 103–107.
Kiby, A. (2003). Redefining social and environmental relations at the ecovillage at Ithaca: A case study. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23, 323–332.
- Week 11 **Environmental citizenship, Part III: Sustainable business**
2007 Mar 21 Complexity and change; economic theories
Lecture readings:
Winter & Koger text, chapter 6, *Cognitive psychology*
Hardin, R., & Remis, M. J. (2006). Biological and cultural anthropology of a changing tropical forest: A fruitful collaboration across subfields. *American Anthropologist*, 108(2), 273–285.
Seminar: **Nonviolent activism**
Seminar readings:

Week	<p>Topics & readings</p> <p>Horwitz, W. A. (2000). Environmental dilemmas: The resolutions of student activists. <i>Ethics and Behavior</i>, 10(3), 281–308.</p> <p>Horton, D. (2004). Green distinctions: The performance of identity among environmental activists. <i>Sociological Review</i>, 52(S1), 63–77.</p>
Week 12 2007 Mar 28	<p>Holistic approaches</p> <p>Chaos; emergence; non-linear prediction</p> <p>Lecture reading: Winter & Koger text, chapter 7, <i>Holistic approaches</i></p> <p>Seminar: Ecological Self in business</p> <p>Seminar reading: Gozdz, K. (2000). Toward transpersonal learning communities in business. <i>American Behavioral Scientist</i>, 43(8), 1262–1285.</p>
Week 13 2007 Apr 04	<p>Reading and reflection journal/portfolio due <i>at end of lecture</i></p> <p>Final exam multiple-choice portion (5%); take-home exam review</p> <p>Lecture reading: Winter & Koger text, chapter 8, <i>Putting it together</i></p> <p>Seminar: Trends and future directions in ecopsychology</p> <p>Seminar reading: 1 peer-reviewed journal article TBA by seminar leaders</p>
Snow day Week 14 2007 Apr 10	<p>Term paper due; to be submitted through essay box in reception area of psychology department by 4:00pm; will be time and date stamped by administrative assistants</p>
2007 Apr 15	<p>Final exam (take-home) distributed via email</p>
2007 Apr 18	<p>Final exam (take-home) due; to be submitted through essay box in reception area of psychology department by 4:00pm; will be time and date stamped by administrative assistants</p>
2007 Apr 25	<p>Term papers and journals ready for return; drop by Laurie's office four Wednesdays until 2007 May 16 (Apr 25, May 2, 9, 16); 9am–noon or by appointment</p>
2007 May 01	<p>Last day for assignment of tree planting bonus mark</p>
2007 May 02	<p>Final exam and (unofficial) course grades posted outside Laurie's office</p>