

**Course Syllabus**  
**Lewis & Clark College**  
**Graduate School of Education and**  
**Counseling**

**Course Name: Introduction to Ecopsychology**  
**Course Number: CPSY 501-01 & CPSY 501-02**  
**Term: Spring 2021**  
**Department: Counseling Psychology**  
**Faculty Name: Daniel L. Cavanaugh,**  
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***Note: Syllabus and content adapted from previous course content developed by Patricia Hasbach, PhD., co-director of ecopsychology certificate program***

**Course Calendar & Meeting Times**

**CSPY 501-01**

**Days:** Sundays March 14<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup>

**Times:** 9:00am – 5:00pm

**Location:** South Chapel, Room AUD

**CSPY 501-02**

**Days:** Saturdays March 13<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>

**Times:** 9:00am – 5:00pm

**Location:** South Chapel, Room AUD

**Catalog Description:**

This course guides students toward self-reflection regarding identity and experience related to place, the natural world, and other species; and motivations for integrating ecological perspectives into academic, professional or advocacy work.

**Course Description:**

Ecopsychology is the field of inquiry concerned with the human-nature relationship. A basic tenet of ecopsychology is that our inner worlds and the outer world are intimately connected. As a species, we came of age embedded in the natural world, and that need for nature still resides in our bodies, minds, and spirit. A substantial body of scientific evidence demonstrates the physical and psychological benefits of interacting with nature. There is a growing interest in this area of psychology as we recognize the decreased presence of nature in our lives; the exponential growth of technology in daily living; and the awareness of global climate change and the role psychology has to play in addressing it. Ecopsychology recognizes that one of our central challenges of our time is to integrate our connection with nature with our scientific culture and our technological selves. This course guides students toward self-reflection regarding their environmental identity and their “sense of place”; it explores the motivations for integrating ecological perspectives into academic and professional work; and it addresses the interrelationship between human and planetary health and wellbeing.

**Course Structure**

- This one-credit course includes two in-person class sessions that are held on two weekend days one month apart.

- The course includes self-directed activities outside of the classroom sessions.
- During the class meetings, didactic presentations will be balanced by group exercises, outdoor activities, in-class student presentations, and video presentations.
- For zoom students, activities will be self-directed in outdoor spaces near their homes while the class is exploring locations near campus.
- Course activities include readings from assigned text and articles, written work, reflection exercises, and in-class presentations.
- Each class meeting will include classroom time and outdoor activities on campus. Students should dress appropriately for the weather. I recommend bringing extra layers, a warm drink, and whatever you need to be comfortable.

### **Preparing for Class**

- This course will be partially inside and partially outside. We will be outside if it is 65 and sunny. We will also be outside if it is 38 and rainy. Please check the forecast before class and bring the clothing you will need to remain comfortable.
- Be prepared to sit or stand outdoors. I recommend bringing a sit pad or blanket to keep your butt warm if the weather is unpleasant.
- EVERYONE MUST FOLLOW COVID SAFETY GUIDELINES. It is expected that everyone will wear a mask, use hand sanitizer, and follow social distancing guidelines. Please consult Lewis & Clark COVID protocols along with guidelines issued by the CDC if you have any questions on how to follow these guidelines. If students refuse to follow appropriate guidelines, they will be asked to leave the class to maintain safety for the other students and the instructor.
- This is a long day, bring snacks and drinks to consume as needed. Please consume these things in a fashion that follows COVID guidelines. If you need to leave class to have a drink or snack, that is okay! Take care of yourself in a way that takes care of others.
- Take care of yourself! If you need to get up and stretch, use the restroom, or take care of personal needs, please do.
- Please leave cell phones in cars, backpacks, or other places that they will not distract you. A component of this class is exploring how the digital world disconnects us from the natural world. Please do not let your digital distraction become a teaching moment for the class as a whole. Having said this, I understand that many of us are parents, caretakers, and have other roles that require us to respond to emergencies. So, if you must have your phone on you, please be respectful.

### **Course Goals:**

1. Gain a comprehensive understanding of Ecopsychology and be able to identify, articulate, and critique the leading theories, concepts, and issues within the field.
2. Develop an understanding of the impact of one's environmental identity on one's worldview and recognize how one's worldview influences their vision for a sustainable society.
3. Develop a deeper understanding of the influence of the human-nature relationship on our mental health and physical well-being.
4. Gain a deeper understanding of various methods and practices of ecopsychology and begin to identify ways to integrate this work into one's academic and professional development.

### **Course Readings:**

This course has one required text (available at the LC bookstore and in various online venues such as Amazon.com). Additional readings will be made available during the course.

### **Required text:**

Kahn, P. H., Jr. & Hasbach, P.H. (2012). *Ecopsychology: Science, totems, and the technological species*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

### **Course Requirements:**

1. Full class attendance is required. Since class sessions are experiential and involve group process, there is no effective “make up” to class attendance.
2. Since this course is designed to be an interactive experiential exploration of Ecopsychology, students’ participation in class discussions and activities are essential. If there are any questions or concerns regarding the participation in any particular experiential exercise, please notify the instructor. Class participation includes:
  - a. Informed discussion of reading assignments
  - b. Engagement in class activities and exercises
  - c. Personal reflections regarding in-class activities
  - d. Respectful and constructive feedback on peers oral and/or written work
3. Personal description paper
4. Reflection/process paper (2-3 pages of text, double spaced, plus references)
5. Self-directed exercises and journal entries during the mid-course month including:
  - a. Place Bonding Exercise and sharing of journal entries in some creative way
  - b. Screen Time/ Nature Time log and sharing summary with class
6. Final Course Integration Paper

### **Personal Description Paper – due two days before first class meeting**

Short personal description (2-3 paragraphs, 1-2 pages maximum) of yourself (e.g., background and academic focus), your interest in and/or experiences with ecopsychology or related areas, and any goals you have for this course. Also include any questions you have about ecopsychology and how you can integrate these concepts into your life and professional goals

*Your paper must be turned in on Moodle, if technical issues happen, an emailed copy to the instructor is acceptable.*

### **Reflection/ Process Paper – due one week following the first class. By midnight on Sunday the 21st**

Students will submit a 3-page reflection/process paper after the first weekend meeting. In this paper, you should engage with and reflect upon the main idea of each the assigned readings. Reflect upon how you perceive these concepts affecting yourself, your communities, or those you interact with in your professional life. You may also integrate class exercises and discussion from our first weekend meeting. Quote or paraphrase critical passages in the articles/chapters to develop your ideas in a scholarly manner. Papers should be submitted in APA 6 or 7 format (I don’t care which one, just be consistent) with a cover page and references. Good grammar, spelling, and polished writing are important! *Your paper must be turned in on Moodle, if technical issues happen, an emailed copy to the instructor is acceptable*

### **Mid-course Exercise: Place Bonding– Due 4/7/21**

(Khan & Hasbach, 2012)

During the four weeks between our class weekend meetings, I would like you to explore a relationship with some special place in nature near you. This place may be a site in wild nature, in a local park, on campus, or any outdoor space you are drawn to. If you have a place you frequently visit, this is a great start. However, for this assignment, you should go deeper.

Please go there at least twice a week for the next several weeks (minimum 6 visits). Go there at various times of the day and in different weather conditions. Don’t be afraid to sit in the rain, wind, or cold. I

would like you to write a journal entry each time you visit your special place. You can write these journal entries while you are there or as reflections once you return home (there is preferred) Here are a few suggestions for your journaling:

1. How do you feel in this place? What state of mind arises in you here?
2. What is the nature of your relationship with this place?
3. What relationship do you perceive your community has with this place?
4. How do you experience, if at all, healing in this place?
5. What are some of the relationships you observe in this place?
6. What sensations do you notice when you are here?
7. What do you feel compelled to write about when you are in this special place?

Please bring your journal entries with you to our second weekend class meeting. You will be asked to read or share in some creative way, one entry with the class.

*Please turn in a hard copy of all your journal entries to the instructor on Sunday, 4/7/21. If you have handwritten pages in a journal, please make a clear Xerox copy of your journal pages to turn in so that you can keep your journal.*

### **Mid-course Exercise: Screen Time/ Nature Time Log – due Sunday, 4/7/21**

(Khan & Hasbach, 2012)

During the period between our weekend meetings, I would like you to choose at least one week (7 days or more) and log the time you spend interacting with digital technology and interacting with nature. Please log time you spent in front of a technological screen (TV, movie, computer, cell phone, iPad, tablet, etc.) Record date, type of technology, activity, amount of time spent. For the same period, please record the time you spend outdoors in nature, noting date, location, activity, amount of time spent. I want you to consider the effect that logging this behavior has had on your behavior.

*Please turn in a hard copy of your screen time/ nature time logs to the instructor on Moodle by 4/7/21*

### **Final Course Integration Paper – Due 4/24/21**

The final paper for this course is an integration of the projects you have done throughout this class. It will have three main sections: 1) A personal ecopsychology reflection; 2) A place bonding journal summary & 3) A screen/nature log reflection. This paper should use APA format for a student paper (you can use 6<sup>th</sup> ed. or 7<sup>th</sup> ed. as long as you are consistent throughout). This paper is an integration of all course materials. Please do not turn this into a separate massive project. There is a lot of content in this class for one credit, please do not make this project bigger than it needs to be. Please turn this paper in on Moodle by 4/24/21

For your personal ecopsychology reflection, I would like you to rework your personal description and reflection/process papers. Replace your goals for this course, with learnings that you have had during this course. I would like you to write a summary of how you are going to implement these learnings into your personal and professional life moving forward. It is okay to take your first paper and update it to show your learning at the conclusion of this course.

For your place bonding summary, I want you to write a narrative that summarizes your relationship development with the place that you spent time in. This should be authentic. If you had a magical experience with a deep connection, share that. If you had a frustrating connection where you were plagued with freeway noise and littered Cheetos bags, that is okay too. This is about exploring the relationships that we developed and our perceptions related to these relationships.

For your screen/nature log reflection, I would like you to include your log (in chart form or however you prefer). I would also like you to reflect on your data. Interesting thoughts to ponder are a comparison

between screen time and time in nature. Also, consider overlap? Screen time in nature; the relationship between the two.

Finish the paper with a short conclusion that ties the 3 sections together.

### **Evaluation and Assessment:**

Written and oral presentations will be evaluated on the basis of their clarity, thoughtfulness, and integration of themes and issues discussed in the class. A grade of A will be given to papers and presentations that are clear, thoughtful, and tied to the themes of the course. To receive an A grade, papers must follow APA formatting. B+ and B papers and presentations will be missing one or more of these elements. Course participation grading will also follow this format.

### **Grading:**

|             |           |            |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| 97-100 = A+ | 93-96 = A | 90-92 = A- |
| 87- 89 = B+ | 83-86 = B | 80-82 = B- |
| 77- 79 = C+ | 73-76 = C | 70-72 = C- |

Class participation – 10 pts  
 Personal Description Paper – 5 pts  
 Reflection /Process Paper – 20 pts  
 Place Bonding Journal/Sharing – 15 pts  
 Screen Time/ Nature Time Log – 10 pts  
 Final Paper – 40 pts

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE**

Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or marital status and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS/ ACCOMMODATIONS**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability and/or you have emergency medical information to share please make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible. This course will spend time in natural areas on and around campus. If you believe you will have a hard time walking on a natural trail or in an outdoor setting, please notify the instructor. Nature should be accessible to all and it is my goal to assure everyone can utilize natural places during this course.

### **CPSY DEPARTMENTAL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

The following schedule will help you organize your reading assignments for this course. Please come to class meetings prepared to discuss the readings assigned. Additional readings may be added by the instructor during the course.

**Prior to the First Weekend Meeting:**

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Introduction: Ecopsychology: Science, totems, and the technological species  | Kahn & Hasbach |
| Ch. 1 The topophilia hypothesis: Ecopsychology Meets Evolutionary Psychology | Sampson, S.    |
| Ch. 3 What is Ecopsychology? A Radical View                                  | Fisher, A.     |

Articles: (provided by instructor)

Pavel, M.P., & Anthony, C., (2015) Building just and resilient communities:  
New foundations for ecopsychology  
Pedretti-Burls (2007), Ecotherapy: A therapeutic and educative model  
Buzzell & Chalquist (2017) Twenty principles of ecoresilience

**Prior to the Second Weekend Meeting:**

|                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Ch. 10 Beauty and the brain | Sewall, L. |
| Ch. 11 Sacred geography     | Davis, W.  |

Articles: (provided by instructor)

Richtel, M. (2010) Outdoors and out of reach, studying the brain  
Sturm & Echterling (2017) Preparing for the mental health impact of climate change  
Davis (2011), Ecopsychology, transpersonal psychology and nonduality