

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

**Course Name: Theoretical & Empirical Basis of Ecopsychology**

**Course Number: CPSY 554**

**Term: Spring 2021**

**Department: Counseling, Therapy, and School Psychology**

**Faculty Name: Patricia H. Hasbach, Ph.D.**

**Faculty Phone/Email: 541-345-1410/ [phasbach@lclark.edu](mailto:phasbach@lclark.edu)**

**Course Calendar & Meeting Times**

**Days:** Saturday, February 6, 2021 and Saturday, March 6, 2021

**Times:** 9:00am – 5:00pm

**Location:** York Graduate Center, Room 107

**Course Descriptions:**

This course provides an introduction to ecopsychological theory and surveys research that supports the theoretical foundations of nature-based practices found in Ecotherapy and Wilderness Therapy. The course also surveys related concepts, findings and practices in psychology and the social sciences that provide a foundation for conservation and sustainability work, and for environmental education, advocacy, and activism.

**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.
- 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.

**Course Goals:**

1. Gain a broader and deeper 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 how Ecopsychology interfaces with other areas of psychology, the social sciences, and the humanities.
3. Develop a deeper understanding of the influence of the human-nature relationship on our mental health and physical well-being, as well as the sustainability of the planet.
4. Gain a deeper understanding of various applications and practices of ecopsychology and begin to identify ways to integrate this work into therapy, health care, environmental education and advocacy, and professional conservation and sustainability work.

### **Course Readings:**

This course has two required texts (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.

Selhub, E.M. & Logan, A.C. (2012). *Your Brain on Nature: The Science of Nature's Influence on Your Health, Happiness, and Vitality*. Mississauga, Ontario, Canada: Wiley

### **Course Requirements:**

1. Full class attendance is required. Since class weekends are experiential and involve group process, there is no effective "make up" to class attendance. Consult instructor regarding any absences in advance. Missed class time may result in an incomplete.
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 written work
3. Reflection/process paper (2-3 pages, plus references)
4. Mid-course research assignment and Class Presentation/Paper

### **Reflection/ Process Paper – due Monday, 2/15/21**

Students will submit a 2-3 page reflection/process paper after the first weekend meeting. In this paper, you should engage with the main ideas in the assigned readings. You can also draw on class exercises and discussion from our first weekend meeting. Quote from critical passages in the articles or chapters to develop your ideas in a scholarly manner. Papers should be submitted in APA format with a cover page and references. Good grammar, spelling, and polished writing are important! Papers turned in late will lose credit.

*Please email your paper to the instructor as an attachment in a Word-compatible document. Your paper with comments will be returned to you via email.*

### **Mid-course Assignment: Report and Presentation on an Innovative Application of Ecopsychology – due Saturday, 3/6/21**

Students will research an innovative *application of ecopsychology as it relates to the health benefits of direct contact with nature* and cite at least two substantive research sources in their presentation and paper. The application can be an ecotherapeutic method (e.g. outdoor therapy for the treatment of depression, animal assisted therapy with trauma patients, equine therapy with veterans, etc. ) or an application of ecopsychology related to sustainability practices, environmental education in schools,

biophilic design in city planning, etc. Students should read at least two sources (journal articles, book chapters, substantive blogs, etc.) on their topic of choice and be able to incorporate reading assignments from class texts. Students will submit a written report on their topic (in APA format) and be prepared to offer a 10 minute oral presentation on that topic in class. Note: Power Point is optional for your presentation. This assignment will be graded on: (1) Preparation, (2) Quality of Presentation, (3) Clear understanding of how the application relates to the health benefits of human-nature contact research and the restorative benefits of nature theory, (4)Thoroughness of the written report, (5) Integration of assigned readings and at least 2 outside sources, (6) APA format, on time, & polished writing.

*Please turn in a hard copy of your paper, with references, to the instructor on the day of your presentation. Papers turned in after our class meeting will lose credit.*

### **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. 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-

#### **Course points (75 Total):**

Class participation – 15 pts

Reflection/ Process paper – 20 pts

Final Report and class presentation – 40 pts (Presentation – 20 pts; Final Report/Paper – 20 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.

### **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:**

From *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*:

Introduction: Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species      Kahn & Hasbach  
Building the Science Base: Ecopsychology Meets Clinical Epidemiology      Frumkin, H.

From *Your Brain on Nature*:

Introduction & Chapters 1-4

Additional Reading:

“Nature contact and human health: A research agenda”  
“Ecotherapy – A Forgotten Ecosystem Service: A Review”

**Prior to the Second Weekend Meeting:**

From *Your Brain on Nature*:

Chapters 5,6,7,9

Additional Readings:

“Impact of nature imagery on people in severely nature-deprived environments”  
“Nature walks as part of therapeutic intervention for depression”

(Read these articles noting the various research methods used)