



## GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND COUNSELING

**Counseling, Therapy, and School Psychology Department**  
**ECOT 554: Theoretical & Empirical Basis of Ecopsychology**  
**Spring 2024**

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**Faculty Name:** Carol Doyle, PhD

**Faculty Phone/Email:** 503-768-6060 (CTSP office) cdoyle@lclark.edu

**Advising:** Monday mornings and/ Friday afternoons by appt

### **Course Calendar & Meeting Times**

**Days:** Saturday, March 16th, 2023 and Saturday, April 20th, 2023

**Times:** 9:00am – 5:30 pm

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

### **Catalog Description**

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

### **Course Structure:**

- This one-credit course includes two in-person class sessions that are held on two Saturdays approximately 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, 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 including wearing (or bringing) comfortable shoes.**

### **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 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.
3. Gain a deeper understanding of various applications and practices of ecopsychology/ecotherapy and begin to identify ways to integrate this work into therapy, health care, environmental education and advocacy, and professional conservation and sustainability work.

### **Course Schedule – see below**

### **Course Readings:**

This course has two required texts (available by order through the LC bookstore and other various online venues such as Amazon.com) as well as additional readings and resources. These readings and resources will be made available during the course.

### **Required texts:**

Kahn, P. H., Jr. & Hasbach, P.H. (2012). *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*. 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*. 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/ecotherapy, 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: class presentation/paper

### **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.

Each assignment will be graded via a point system. Generally speaking, the following grades can be associated with the points for each assignment and for the final grade. Final grade will be based off of the following percentages

91 - 100 = A	90 = A	
88- 89 = B+	83-87 = B	80-82 = B-
77- 79 = C+	73-76 = C	70-72 = C-/No credit

**Late papers and assignments:** Any assignments turned in late (without previous permission) will automatically receive a 10% reduction in grade.

**Course points (80 Total):**

- Class participation – 20 pts
- Reflection/ Process paper – 20pts
- Final Report and class presentation – 40 pts (Presentation – 20 pts; Handout – 20 pts)

**CTSP AND GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES**

**CTSP Departmental Attendance Policy/Requirements:**

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 (including COVID related illness) 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. Please note that exceptions to these policies may be worked out if you have an illness or family situation related to COVID-19

One absence without arrangement or explanation (no class participation points), 2<sup>nd</sup> absence requires a make-up of class assignments, an additional assignment (such as an additional write up or an article summary) and explanation.

**Computer and Cell Phone Use:** Please be respectful of others and use laptops and/or cell phones during class for classroom activities (note taking, etc.) only. Use of laptops/cell phones for **non-classroom** activities during class time will result in a reduction of participation points. Cell phones must be silenced (if necessary vibrate ok) and text messaging is not allowed during class time unless emergency. If there is an emergency you may exit the class to use your cell. Laptops and cells phones may of course be used on breaks. If alternate learning needs require additional accommodations please let me know at the beginning of the semester.

**Accommodations for Students with Special Needs and/or Disabilities:**

*If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible. Please notify me of any special learning considerations that I should be aware of so that we can work together to make the appropriate accommodations.*

### **Additional Policies**

This course adheres to the general policies outlined in the catalog and student handbook of the Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling. This includes full adherence to the following policies:

- Nondiscrimination: [go.lclark.edu/gsec-nondiscrimination](http://go.lclark.edu/gsec-nondiscrimination);
- Standards for professional student conduct and academic integrity: [go.lclark.edu/gsec-conduct](http://go.lclark.edu/gsec-conduct);
- Sexual misconduct: [go.lclark.edu/titleIX](http://go.lclark.edu/titleIX).

### **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE - READINGS & ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS**

**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)
  - Ecotherapy (Hasbach)
  - Building the Science Base: Ecopsychology Meets Clinical Epidemiology (Frumkin,)
- From *Your Brain on Nature*:
  - Introduction & Chapters 1-4
- Additional Reading(s):\*
  - “Nature contact and human health: A research agenda”
  - “Ecotherapy – A Forgotten Ecosystem Service: A Review”
  - Impact of nature imagery on people in severely nature-deprived environments”

\*Note(s): One additional reading may be added before class; articles available on Moodle

### **Prior to the Second Weekend Meeting:**

- From Your Brain on Nature:
  - Chapters 5,6,7,9
  
- Additional Reading(s):\* Read research articles noting the various research methods used
  - “Nature walks as part of therapeutic intervention for depression”
  - The 2021 Western North American heat dome increased climate change anxiety among British Columbians: Results from a natural experiment
  - The Psychological Impacts of Global Climate Change

### **Assignment Descriptions**

#### ***Reflection/ Process Paper – due by Saturday 3/23***

This assignment consists of a 2-3 page reflection/process paper written after the first weekend meeting. In this paper, you should engage with the main ideas in the assigned readings as well as drawing on class exercises and discussion from the first class. Quotes from critical passages in the articles or chapters may help present your ideas in a scholarly manner. Papers should be proofread for proper spelling and grammar and submitted in APA format (a cover page is not needed) including proper citations and references.

*Please upload paper to Moodle by 5 pm March 23rd*

#### ***Mid-course Assignment: Presentation and Handout on an Innovative Application of Ecopsychology – due Saturday, 4/20/23***

In groups of two determined at first course meeting, students will research an innovative **application of ecopsychology/ecotherapy 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 application of ecopsychology/ecotherapy related to mental and/or physical health, environmental health, sustainability practices, environmental education in schools, biophilic design in city planning, etc.

For the assignment, students should read at least 4 sources (journal articles, book chapters, substantive blogs, etc.), incorporate reading assignments from class texts, and cite at least two substantive research sources in their presentation and ‘paper’. On April 20<sup>th</sup> each group 2 will be prepared to offer a **10 minute oral presentation** on their topic in class. Additionally, each group will submit a **written 1-Page ‘Handout’** on their topic (with citations at the bottom in APA format) The handouts will be distributed to all students as a collaboratively-created resource from the class. *Note: Power Point may be included but 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 (the handout)
5. Integration of assigned readings and at least 2 outside sources,
6. APA format, on time, & clear writing

*Note: One of the group members must upload the handout and references via Moodle on the day of your presentation. Papers turned in after our class meeting may lose points on the assignment*