

## ENVIRONMENTAL LITERATURE eng 2315



Crumb, R. "A History of America." 1979

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Office Hours: MTWT 10 - 2 pm

Class Meetings: TT 2-3:15 pm

MAB 206

### Texts

Thoreau, Henry David. *The Portable Thoreau*. Ed. Jeffrey Cramer. Penguin, 2012. Print.  
ISBN 9780143106500

*The Ecopoetry Anthology*. Eds. Ann Fisher-Wirth and Laura Gray Street. Trinity UP, 2013. Print.  
ISBN 9781595349293

Powers, Richard. *The Overstory*. Norton, 2018. ISBN 9780393356687

### Course Description

This course is a survey of Environmental Literature. Our method will be to read, write and discuss, over and over. There is no greater luxury than to read and think, except perhaps to share ideas with others. Thoreau, in his essay "Walking" on education would say that to "saunter" in the woods, thinking, questioning, and connecting with real living things is the highest and holy (saintly) freedom (free from property—sans terre). This class sets aside time for reading, talking and connecting. We will also read contemporary articles on current issues each week. The retreat into nature is an act of non-conformity, as are reading, writing and thinking. Why else were universities founded in remote places? Resistance--the term Thoreau used in the title of his essay on civil disobedience--is a near synonym for non-conformity. The antidote for a corrupt, exploitative, and militaristic social system is found in nature: "In wildness is the preservation of the world," wrote Thoreau. Environmental writing does two things: it identifies with the natural world while seeking to protect it. And it casts a critical gaze at anthropocentric economic system which is destroying divine creation.

**Marketable Skills:**

1. Students will communicate effectively in writing and speaking.
2. Students will use different research strategies to address problems and develop ideas that engage a variety of perspectives.
3. Students will recognize how social and cultural contexts shape meaning and language.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

**SLO 1** – Students will be able to construct documents that demonstrate unity, organization, coherence, and development, and are grammatically correct.

**SLO 2** – Students will be able to analyze and interpret literary works by applying principles of critical thinking, literary criticism, or theoretical engagement.

**SLO 3** – Students will be able to produce researched documents that demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of credible sources, employ them effectively through quotations and paraphrases, integrate them smoothly into the writer's own prose, and document them correctly using the style appropriate to the document.

**Class Participation**

The class participation grade will be determined by

- a. Participation in sustainability events
- b. Attendance
- c. Participation in classroom discussion and problem solving.

**Attendance**

Two absences are permitted during the semester. One letter grade will be subtracted from the Class Attendance percentage for each additional absence. ***More than nine (6) unexcused absences will result in the student being dropped from the course with a failing grade.*** Absences resulting from required school activities, direct personal emergencies, or health issues will be excused--but you must notify the instructor within one week of the absence and make up any class work in a timely manner.

**Projects****I. Response Papers (600 points; 6 total @ 100 points each)**

There will be two response papers due for each of our three books and a unit on poetry. Writing allows people to reflect, organize their ideas, and present evidence. Therefore, each response paper must be at least two pages in length. Write an interpretive essay about the reading. To illustrate your argument, refer to a place you know in order to compare and contrast with the landscape described in the reading. Write analytically about you're the form of the writing effects meaning—that's "close reading."

- Provide a title
- At least two (2) pages for each paper
- Organize your ideas into paragraphs—at least four.
- Explain one meaningful aspect of the literature
- Quote the readings and cite the page numbers in MLA style.
- Relate and extend the ideas in the reading to current environmental issues and your own life.
- Explain the meaning and relevance of the texts. Do not summarize.

**2. Term Paper (300 points; Due April 29)**

Write a term paper of at least four pages which associates one of the readings to an excursion into the nature that you took during the semester. You can do this by alternating interpretation of the text with description of your experience, and then tying the two together. You will need to plan a trip and be prepared to take notes and photos.

**4. Final Exam (50 points)**

The final Exam will give you an opportunity to synthesize ideas—to connect and apply the ideas of multiple writers. This is sometimes called inter-textual interpretation.

**5. Class Participation (50 points)**

The class participation grade will reflect engagement in class discussion, the planning of the midterm excursion, in-class writing and attendance.

Projects	Due Date	%	Points
Response Papers	6 100 points each 2 pages each	60	600
Experiential + Critical Term Paper	April 29	30	300
Final		5	50
Class Participation		5	50
Total Points Available		100	1000

**Deadlines**

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class on their due dates. All alternative arrangements must be approved before the relevant deadline. Late work without previous arrangement with me will only be accepted upon demonstration of extenuating circumstances.

**Incompletes**

Incompletes will only be granted if there is a valid reason why the student is unable to complete the course work due health, accident, or family emergency and at least 50% of the course assignments are completed.

**Blackboard**

If you confront technical issues which interfere with your ability to use Blackboard, contact the LTAC (Lobo Technology Assistance Center) at 432-837-8888 or <https://techassist.sulross.edu>

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities and Counseling Services**

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Ronnie Harris, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or Mailing address: P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

### **Additional Counseling Services**

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting Timelycare/SRSU. The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

### **Libraries**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu/](http://library.sulross.edu/). Off-campus access requires logging in with your Lobold and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting [library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/](http://library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/) or ask a librarian by emailing [srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu).

### **Tutoring at the English Department's Online Writing Center**

The English Department provides tutoring through Blackboard Collaborate. I will assign extra credit for major assignments receiving feedback from the tutors in the English Department's Online Writing Center.

### **Tutoring Center**

[The Lobo Den Tutoring Center](#) offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!

#### **Important Information:**

- **Drop-in and Scheduled Appointments:** Flexible options to fit your needs.
- **Hours of Operation:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- **Workshops:** Attend our regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development, often in collaboration with specialized faculty.
- **Location:** BWML Room 128.
- **Contact Us:** For more information or to book an appointment, email [tutoring@sulross.edu](mailto:tutoring@sulross.edu) or call (432) 837-8726.

#### **Looking for additional support?**

- **Tutor.com** offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.
- Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. We look forward to helping you succeed!

### **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

Dishonest acts, such as plagiarism (using words or a specific author's ideas from another source without

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acknowledging the source) or collusion (having other people write parts of your paper for you), may result in an “F” on the assignment and may lead to a disciplinary hearing conducted through the office of the Dean of Students, which could result in suspension or expulsion from SRSU. If you have questions about whether your use of other sources (such as books, websites, friends, or Writing Center tutors) is fair or not, please ask before turning in the work that you have a question about.

**Classroom Climate of Respect**

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

**Course Calendar**

DATES	Readings to Discuss	Details	DUE DATES
<b>Week One</b>			
1.15	Introduce Syllabus  First-day assessment on Mary Oliver’s “The Summer Day”		
<b>Week Two</b>			
1.20	Thoreau “Walking” 555-90	Peripatetic philosophy	
1.22	“Ktaadn” 45-72	Theory of Education  The Wild Sublime	
<b>Week Three</b>			
1.27	Thoreau “Civil Disobedience” 73-98	Ethics and environmentalism	
1.29	<i>The Journal</i> 163-78	journaling	
<b>Week Four</b>			
2.3	Thoreau <i>Walden</i>	Sustainability	Response paper 1 Due 2.3
2.5	“Economy” to “Reading” 197-287	Existentialism Literacy	
<b>Week Five</b>			
2.10	Thoreau <i>Walden</i>	Community Individualism  Bioregionalism	

2.12	“Sounds” to “The Baker Farm” 288-368	Observation	
<b>Week Six</b>			
2.17	Thoreau <i>Walden</i>	Ethics	
2.19	“Higher Laws” to “The Pond in Winter” 364-435	Irony Relations	
<b>Week Seven</b>			
2.24	Thoreau <i>Walden</i> “Spring” and “Conclusion” <i>Ecopoetry</i>	Sublime Evolutionary Theory	
2.26	Walt Whitman 3		
<b>Week Eight</b>			
3.3	<i>Ecopoetry</i> Robert Frost 21	Concreteness	Response paper 1 Due 3.3
3.5	Wendell Berry 174	Mad Farmer	
<b>Week Nine</b>			
3.10	<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>	
3.12			
<b>Week Ten</b>			
3.17	<i>Ecopoetry</i> Janes Hirschfield 327	Buddhist	
3.19	Linda Hogan 336	Worldly Native American	
<b>Week 11</b>			
3.24	<i>Ecopoetry</i> W.S. Merwin 401	Late Imagism	Response Paper 3 on poetry Due 3.24
3.26	Mary Oliver 417	Engaged art	
<b>Week 12</b>			
3.31	<i>Ecopoetry</i> Derek Sheffield 472	NW	April 3: Last day to withdraw with a W.
4.2	Gary Snyder 491		
<b>Week 13</b>			

4.7	<i>The Overstory</i>		Response Paper 4 on poetry Due 4.7
4.9			
<b>Week 14</b>			
4.14	<i>The Overstory</i>		
4.16			
<b>Week 15</b>			
4.21	<i>The Overstory</i>		Response Paper 5 on The Overstory Due 4.21
4.23			
<b>Week 16</b>			
4.28 Last Day	<i>The Overstory</i>		Response Paper 4 Due 4.28
<b>Week 17 (Finals Week)</b>			
	Final Exam		Term Paper Due on Date of Final Exam

**Educator Standards:** For students seeking certification, this course will cover aspects of the following TEA educator competencies:

English Language Arts and Reading EC-6 Subject I:

*Competency 004 (Literacy Development): The teacher understands that literacy develops over time, progressing from emergent to proficient stages and uses a variety of approaches to support the development of students' literacy.*

*Competency 006 (Fluency Reading): The teacher understands the importance of fluency for reading comprehension and provides many opportunities for students to improve their reading fluency.*

*Competency 007 (Reading Comprehension and Applications): The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows the components and processes of reading comprehension and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension, including using a variety of texts and contexts.*

*Competency 009 (Reading, Inquiry, and Research): The teacher understands the importance of research and inquiry skills to students' academic success and provides students with instruction that promotes their acquisition and effective use of those study skills in the content areas.*

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*Competency 010 (Writing Conventions): The teacher understands the conventions of writing in English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying writing conventions.*

*Competency 011 (Written Communication): The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.*

*Competency 012 (Viewing and Representing): The teacher understands skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images and messages in various types of media, and provides students with opportunities to develop in this area.*

*Competency 013 (Assessment of Developing Literacy): The teacher understands the basic principles of literacy assessment and uses a variety of assessments to guide literacy instruction.*

English Language Arts and Reading 4-8 Domain II:

*Competency 004 (Reading Comprehension and Assessment): The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.*

*Competency 005 (Reading Applications): The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and teaches students to apply those skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.*

*Competency 006 (Written Language—Writing Conventions): The teacher understands the conventions of written English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying written conventions.*

*Competency 007 (Written Language—Composition): The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.*

*Competency 008 (Study and Inquiry Skills): The teacher understands the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning in the content areas and promotes students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.*

English Language Arts and Reading 7-12

Domain I:

*Competency 001: The teacher understands and applies knowledge of relationships among the language arts and between the language arts and other aspects of students' lives and learning.*

Domain II:

*Competency 004: The teacher understands reading processes and teaches students to apply these processes.*

*Competency 005: The teacher understands reading skills and strategies for various types of nonliterary texts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their lifelong learning.*

*Competency 006: The teacher understands literary elements, genres, and movements and demonstrates knowledge of a substantial body of literature.*

*Competency 007: The teacher understands strategies for reading literary texts and provides students with opportunities to formulate, express, and support responses to literature.*

*Competency 008: The teacher understands and promotes writing as a recursive, developmental, integrative and ongoing process and provides students with opportunities to develop competence as writers.*

*Competency 9: The teacher understands effective writing and teaches students to write effectively in a variety of forms and for various audiences, purposes, and contexts.*