

***Writing 575/575G: Environmental Communications***

**Instructor: Dr. Helen Correll,**

**Midway Office I (1380 Energy Park Place-Suite 204/205)**

**E-mail: Helen.Correll@metrostate.edu (probably most effective)**

**Office phone: (651) 643-2558 Home phone: (651) 439-9115**

**Office Hours: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Mon. & Wed.; 5-6 p.m. Tues. and Thurs.**

**Course description:** This course focuses on environmental communication which encompasses a multidisciplinary viewpoint. We will try to understand how environmental issues and conflicts develop, the values underlying the perspectives on these issues, and the scientific and technical information involved in understanding environmental communication. We will cover environmental policy, scientific writing, philosophy, history, rhetoric and case studies about particular environmental issues. We will also look at how environmental values can be conveyed throughout a variety of media.

**Competence statement:** Students will know and understand the complexities of environmental issues and how societal values and scientific values intersect and compete in environmental conflicts. Students will analyze and evaluate the various interests and disciplines that affect and create environmental issues.

**Learning objectives:** By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Understand the complexities of environmental issues.
2. Analyze the underlying values that propel disagreements.
3. Understand the role of scientific and technical writing in environmental issues.
4. Establish guidelines for effective environmental communication.

**Course overview:** Throughout this semester, we will study and discuss various issues involved in environmental communication. As this is an upper-division/graduate-level course, we will conduct the course as a seminar with students contributing most of the discussion. Each week, we will cover an issue or multidisciplinary way of looking at environmental communication. You need to thoroughly read and digest the readings to participate in the discussions.

**Course projects:** Each student will prepare an annotated bibliography of approximately 20-25 entries on a topic of their choice in environmental communication. Please bring enough copies of your completed annotated bibliography to share with the class. The final project will consist of a graduate-level project or paper that synthesizes all that you have learned in this course. The projects and papers will be shared with the class at the final class.

**Required text: *Landmark Essays on Rhetoric and the Environment***

**Various handouts throughout the course**

If you have a disability that could affect your performance in this class or that requires an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please see me as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

*MSU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodations for equal access to education or services at MSU, please contact Carolyn Roney at (651)772-7819. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office at (651)772-7641.*

**Note on syllabus:** This course schedule is *tentative*; that is, some assignments may be revised because of time constraints, student input, or progress on assignments. It is your responsibility to keep abreast of the changes.

- (LE) means *Landmark Essays* text

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Class work</b>
<b>August 29</b>			Introduction to course and each other; <i>Cadillac Desert</i>
<b>September 5</b>	<b>Overview of course</b>	<b>Robert Cox (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Magazine example</b>
<b>September 12</b>	<b>Environmental history</b>	<b>Christine Oravec (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Non-fiction examples</b>
<b>September 19</b>	<b>Environmental history</b>	<b>Handouts for environmental history</b>	<b>Fiction example</b>
<b>September 26</b>	<b>Environmental philosophy</b>	<b>Craig Waddell (LE) Bruner and Oelschlaeger (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Journal example</b>  <i>Bring ideas for projects/papers</i>
<b>October 3</b>		<b>No class—research day</b>	
<b>October 10</b>	<b>Environmental policy</b>	<b>Brant Short (LE) Phil Brick (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Environmental group example</b>
<b>October 17</b>	<b>Environmental policy</b>	<b>handouts</b>	<b>Political ads</b>
<b>October 24</b>	<b>Rhetoric of science</b>	<b>Farrell and Goodnight (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Scientific reports</b>
<b>October 31</b>	<b>Narrative and mytheme</b>	<b>Peterson and Choat (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Visual example</b>
<b>November 7</b>		<b><i>Work on annotated bibliography</i></b>	<b>Music example</b>
<b>November 14</b>	<b>Risk communication</b>	<b>Killingsworth and Palmer (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Newspaper example</b>
<b>November 21</b>	<b>Media influence</b>	<b>Lange (LE) Moore (LE) handouts</b>	<b>Movie examples</b> <i>Annotated bib due!</i>
<b>November 28</b>		<b>No class—Thanksgiving</b>	
<b>December 5</b>			<b>Work in class and respond to drafts</b>
<b>December 12</b>			<b>Class presentations</b>

**Student participation in class discussions:** I assume that since you are taking this course, you are interested in environmental communication. In order to fully participate in class discussions, you will need to have read the assigned readings prior to class, thoroughly digested them, then participate in thoughtful and respectful discussions. Participation requires, of course, attendance.

**Examples of environmental communication:** Each class period, each member of the class will bring in examples of environmental communication. We will look at these examples and try to determine the audience, the purpose, the underlying values and messages that are contained in these examples.

**Student presentations:** Each week students will sign up to lead the discussions on the assigned readings and topics. These don't need to be formal presentations—they should, however, help us delve deeper into the topics. You may wish to do additional research on your topic. It might also be a good idea to pick a topic that you might want to focus on for your project/paper.

**Annotated bibliography:** You will write a 20-25 source annotated bibliography that focuses on the issue/topic that you will be using for your final paper/project. Use either MLA or APA format. You will also want to either run off copies for the class, or email your annotated bibliography to your classmates.

**Final project/paper:** For this course, you have the option to either write a traditional, graduate-level research paper, or participate in a political or environmental movement that seeks to influence public policy. If you choose to do a project, you will need to get approval from me, keep a journal of what you are doing throughout the semester, and write a comprehensive final paper that illustrates what you have learned in this course and what you have learned as a result of your experience(s). You will share your research with your classmates on our final class day.

***Grading criteria:***

Student participation in class discussion:	150	
Examples of environmental communication:		120
Student-led discussion:	50	
Annotated bibliography:	100	
Final project/paper:	300	
<b>Total points:</b>	<b>720</b>	

Please feel free to offer suggestions, comments, etc. to help improve the course and the course structure. The topic of environmental communication is constantly changing—I hope that this course will reflect and embrace that change.

Short, noninclusive, bibliography for course handouts:

Coppola, Nancy Walters. "Rhetorical analysis of Stakeholders in Environmental Communication: A Model". *Technical Communication Quarterly*, Winter 1997.

Rosen, Christine Meisn, and Joel Tarr. "The Importance of an Urban Perspective in Environmental History." *Journal of Urban History*, May 1994.

Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land*.

Grinds, Donald, and Bruce E. Johnson. *Ecocide of Native America*.

Waddell, Craig. *And No Birds Sing*.

Miller, Char, and Hal Rothman. *Out of the Woods: Essays in Environmental History*.

Shabecoff, Philip. *A Fierce Green Fire*.

Cronon, William. *Uncommon Ground*. 1996.

Davion, Victoria. "Is Ecofeminism Feminist?" *Ecological Feminism*. Karen Warren, ed.

Pierce, Christine Piere, and Donald VanDeVeer. *People, Penguins, and Plastic Trees*.

Smith, Mick. "The Face of Nature: Environmental Ethics and the Boundaries of Contemporary Social Theory." *Current Sociology*, January 2001.

Gross, Alan. *The Rhetoric of Science*.

Merchant, Carolyn. "Environmental Ethics and Political Conflict: A View from California." *Environmental Ethics*, Spring 1990.

Carrels, *Uphill Against Water*.

Bitzer, Lloyd. "Political Rhetoric." *Landmark Essays*, 1998.

Carpenter, J. Harrison. "Practicing Our Preaching: Gifford Pinchot, Conservation, and the Scientific Rhetoric of Demonstration Forestry." *Essays in the Study of Scientific Discourse*, ed. John T. Battalio.

Neuzil, Mark. *Green Crusades: Environmental Conflict in History*.  
<http://geocities.com/RainForest/3621/HIST.HTM>.

Flicker, John. *Audubon: The Second Century*, 2002.

Rosenbaum, Walter. *Environmental Politics and Policy*, 1995.

Harris, Randy Allen. *Landmark Essays in the Rhetoric of Science*.

Collier, James H. *Scientific and Technical Communication: Theory, Practice, and Policy*, 1997.