REC 310 - Wilderness and American Culture
Fall Semester 2009

Professor:  Anderson B. Young, Ph.D.
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Office Hours:  T 9:50 – 10:50; WRF 9:15-10:15 Other times are available by appointment.

Class Meetings:  Tuesday and Thursday: 2:50-4:05 p.m. Park Center A-307

Catalog Description:  History of ideas and attitudes about wilderness as expressed in the art, literature, philosophy, and politics of American culture.  Emphasis on developing views of wilderness, nature, and environment that are historically and philosophically grounded.

Expanded Course Description:  Students in this course explore the evolution and content of ideas and attitudes about wilderness as expressed in the art, literature, philosophy, and politics of American culture.  Through this course, students should be able to identify and explain, chronologically and thematically, the persons, events, ideas and other influences that shaped and changed American thought and policy relating to wilderness.  Because such a study of wilderness must include a consideration of nature, the environment, and religion, students can expect to demonstrate clearer historical and philosophical thinking about those issues as well.

Most people have opinions about the environment, including wilderness, yet many people do not understand the historical origins and social contexts of those opinions.  Likewise, many people have not studied the bases of opposing points of view.  Wilderness and American Culture, REC 310, gives students an opportunity to understand more fully and even change their own opinions and the viewpoints of others.

This interdisciplinary course is principally a history of ideas about humans’ relationship with nature as expressed through religion, philosophy, and literature and reflected in art, popular culture, and public policy.  Although some of the ideas and worldviews studied in this course are more strongly associated with earlier decades and centuries, they are visible in almost any contemporary debate about the environment (and many other issues).  By examining contemporary evidence of these ideas, students will identify ways that value judgments are justified and how various viewpoints shape the interpretation of technical information and other statements of fact.  Likewise, the course shows students how some scientific and technical information have influenced value judgments and policy regarding humans and the environment.  REC 310 is designated as a liberal arts and sciences course and a SUNY Cortland GE 12 (STVS, science, technology, values and society) course.

Required Texts:

Supplemental (optional) Texts (available at library, college store or other booksellers):
Dustin, D. (1999). The wilderness within (2nd ed.) Champaign, IL: Sagamore

Reserve Readings Notebook:  Other required and optional readings have been collected and placed on “e-reserves”, making them electronically available from the Library web page.  The password to access these readings is <young310>.  A listing of those readings appears below. The schedule of reading assignments and suggestions appears on the course calendar.
Table of Contents (From former supplemental reserve readings notebook.)

- Mathers, K. (ed.), Important Events in the History of American Attitudes Toward Wilderness................................. 1
- White, L., The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis........................................................................................................ 12
- Dubos, R., Franciscan Conservation versus Benedictine Stewardship.................................................................................. 17
- Amarotico, J., Thomas Cole in the Adirondacks...................................................................................................................... 28
- Emerson, R. W., Nature......................................................................................................................................................... 35
- Thoreau, H.D., Where I Lived, and What I Lived for (from Walden)...................................................................................... 51
- Thoreau, H.D., Walking......................................................................................................................................................... 67
- Adirondack Mountain Club, The Forest Preserve of New York State.................................................................................. 75
- Teal, E.W., Introduction to Wilderness World of John Muir................................................................................................. 95
- Muir, J., The Range of Light................................................................................................................................................ 101
- Muir, J., Emerson at Yosemite........................................................................................................................................... 120
- Muir, J., The Philosophy of John Muir................................................................................................................................ 122
- Eliot, J.L., T.R.'s Wilderness Legacy..................................................................................................................................... 129
- Nash, R., Do Rocks have Rights?........................................................................................................................................ 138
- Tucker, W., Is Nature too Good for Us?................................................................................................................................ 149
- Nash, R.F., Why Wilderness?.............................................................................................................................................. 158
- Quammen, D., The Disappeared........................................................................................................................................... 162
- Johnson, W., An Ecological View of History......................................................................................................................... 165
- Himes & Himes, The Sacrament of Creation............................................................................................................................ 174
- Hardin, G., The Tragedy of the Commons............................................................................................................................... 184
- Claire, S., American Women and Wilderness.......................................................................................................................... 192
- Speolhof, P., Till & Keep the Earth: A Reformation of Christian Stewardship........................................................................ 208
- Myres, S. L., The Pleasing Awfulness: Women's Views of Wilderness.................................................................................. 212
- Cornell, G., Native Americans and Environmental Thought: Thoreau and the Transcendentalists........................................ 227
- Old Testament (RSV) - Genesis 1-3; Exodus 20:1-17; Micah 6:8................................................................................................. 237
- McFague, S., A Square in the Quilt: One Theologian's Contribution to the Planetary Agenda.................................................. 249
- Rockefeller, S.C., Faith and Community in an Ecological Age................................................................................................. 260
- United Nations, World Charter for Nature.............................................................................................................................. 277
- Dickenson, J., Trailhead of Wilderness................................................................................................................................. 280
Wilderness and American Culture: A Topical Outline

1. Some elements of environmental outlooks
   a. Concept of human nature
   b. Concept of nature and wild nature
   c. Concept of the universe
   d. Concept of human’s place in nature and the universe
   e. Concept of God
   f. Concept of life’s purpose

2. Origins of American wilderness attitudes and environmental preferences
   a. Prehistoric origins
   b. Wilderness in myth and folklore
   c. Wilderness in the Old and New Testaments
   d. Wilderness in early and medieval Christianity

3. Early reactions to the American wilderness
   a. Old world metaphors describe a new world landscape
      i. New England, Virginia and other early settlements
      ii. Later pioneers
      iii. Tocqueville’s observations

4. Religion and nature and the nature of religion
   a. Lynn White’s thesis
   b. Biblical view of God, humans and “world”
   c. Issues in biblical interpretation
   d. Proof-texting
   e. The nature of religion, religious language, and religious experience
   f. Contemporary theologies of wilderness and nature

5. New ideas from the old world
   a. Enlightenment or Age of Reason
      i. Cultural background
      ii. Essential characteristics
      iii. Locke, Hume and others
      iv. Deism
      v. The sublime
      vi. Implications for wilderness and nature
      vii. Kant – the transition to romanticism
   b. Romanticism
      i. Basic character
      ii. Rousseau, Defoe, others
      iii. Primitivism
      iv. Concepts of human nature, civilization, and nature
      v. Early American romantics
   c. The secularization of culture

6. Creating and recreating an American culture
   a. The nationalistic challenge of culture building
   b. The romantic celebration of American wilderness
      i. Literature – Cooper, Irving, Hoffman, etc.
      ii. Art – The Hudson River school
      iii. Politicians
   c. The ambivalence of American romanticism
   d. The romantic element in contemporary environmental thinking
   e. Wilderness and cultural change
      i. Secularization of culture
      ii. Changing economic paradigms (from agricultural to industrial & beyond)
      iii. Entrepreneurial theories of economic/cultural shifts (e.g., Schumpeter)
7. Thoreau – first wilderness philosopher
   a. Biographical elements
   b. Transcendentalism and beyond
   c. The dialectic of wilderness and civilization
   d. The radical and prophetic implications of Thoreau’s economy
   e. Thoreau's presence and absence in contemporary environmental thought

8. The beginnings of wilderness preservation
   a. Early voices for preservation
      i. Romantic and artistic voices
      ii. The museum value of parks
      iii. GP Marsh – First ecological argument for preservation
      iv. Commercial motivations for Yellowstone and Adirondack
   b. First preserves
      i. Yellowstone and the Adirondack Forest Preserve
      ii. Post-hoc preservation/park rationale

9. Early voices in the conservation
   a. Preservation outlook – Muir, Johnson, etc.
   b. Utilitarian conservation – Pinchot, Magee, etc.
   c. Nationalistic/cultural viewpoint - Roosevelt

10. The people’s wilderness
    a. The Turner thesis
    b. No shining city – the writing of Sinclair and Wood
    c. Wilderness and popular culture
       i. Joe Knowles
       ii. Writings of E.R. Burroughs, Jack London, etc.
       iii. Outdoor living and national character
    d. Hetch Hetchy – a national debate on preservation

11. Factors leading to a National Wilderness Preservation System
    a. The Wilderness Society and Sierra Club
    b. Scarcity theory of value
    c. Values of wilderness
    d. ORRRC report
    e. Flaws in earlier initiatives and agency performance
    f. Important provisions of the Wilderness Act

12. Aldo Leopold and the emergence of environmental ethics
    a. Leopold, the land ethic and the ecological conscience
    b. Anthropocentric, biocentric or ecocentric
    c. Other environmental philosophies
       i. Animal rights
       ii. Ecofeminism
       iii. Deep ecology
       iv. Natural rights and American liberalism
       v. Social ecology, etc.

13. Contemporary perspectives
    a. Literature and art
    b. Popular culture
    c. Politics
    d. Philosophy
    e. Wilderness policy and management
    f. The future of wilderness
    g. Post-modern primitivism
    h. The common and ongoing creation story
    i. The pristine myth
Assignments and Learning Strategies

Final Examination: During a two-hour period, you will write a closed book essay that demonstrates your mastery of the central aim of the course:

Students in this course explore the history of ideas and attitudes about wilderness as expressed in the art, literature, philosophy, and politics of American culture. Through this course, students should be able to identify and explain, chronologically and thematically, the persons, events, ideas and other influences that shaped and changed American thought and policy relating to wilderness.

On the final you may be asked to address the secondary aim of the course, articulating a coherent philosophy of wilderness and the environment.

Study Guides and Unit Quizzes (Almost every week): Much of the material for this course is being presented using a modified version of Fred Keller's personalized system of instruction (PSI). Research has shown the PSI to be an extremely effective means of instruction for a host of disciplines in higher education. Here's how it works.

The content of the Nash book has been divided into a number of units (11-14). A study guide has been prepared for each unit. Through the study guide questions, your instructor has identified the most critical information for you to learn. As you read the book, you are to master the answers to each study guide question. Your mastery will be tested by a quiz for each unit.

Before taking a mastery quiz, you will meet with your instructor during class time for proctoring. Proctoring is the heart of a PSI. During proctoring, you may ask any questions you like about the material. No holds barred. After proctoring, you will take a short quiz of generally fewer than 10 questions.

If you demonstrate mastery (generally no more than one error), you receive 10 points and move on to the next unit. If you do not demonstrate mastery, it's back to the book and study guides for more study (and proctoring by appointment, if you like). You then attempt a second mastery quiz during special in- or out-of-class times. If you demonstrate mastery on the second attempt, you earn 9 points. If not, you receive the actual points earned.

If you need to make a second attempt on a mastery quiz, you should do so within two weeks\(^1\), during in-class opportunities (most Thursdays) or office hours. If you do not, the highest number of points you can earn goes down to 8. If you do not attempt the quiz within four weeks (or by the last week of classes, whichever is sooner), you will receive no points for that quiz. Regular study and good time management are rewarded in this course.

Questions on the quizzes are taken almost entirely from concepts and items on the study guides. There is no secret about what you are expected to learn. Your task is to use the study guides and the proctoring to your advantage. Many students find it helpful to form informal "peer proctoring" groups before each class.

Students are usually pleased by how much they learn and by how much more meaningful seminar discussions are when everyone has mastered the basic information. Most students are also pleased by the grades they earn for this component of the course. In recent years, the summary grades for the PSI units have ranged from 72% to 100% with an average of about 95%.

The BIG IDEA: At the beginning of each study guide is an entry labeled “The Big Idea”. It is a study-writing prompt to help you summarize the major points of a chapter. Almost weekly (see calendar) you are to write your response to the “big idea” prompt. These summaries are a means for you to record in your own words the gist of the chapter(s) read in Wilderness and the American Mind and the supplemental readings. Your summary should be about one single-spaced page or two double-spaced pages. Writing these big idea summaries will greatly simplify your preparation for the final exam (and your achievement of the main objective of the course).

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\(^1\) Retakes will not be given after the last week of classes, regardless of how recently the mastery test was first attempted.
Your summary should be one or two pages that contain the following (required):

- An underlined thesis statement that declares the main purpose or point of the chapter
- A few paragraphs, each beginning with a clear topic sentence, that explain or support the thesis statement.
- Since the book is about the evolution of ideas, you should give attention (after chapter 1 or 2) to the describing shifts in thinking and why they were made. Do this either within the above paragraphs or in a closing paragraph.

After class you should revise or update your summary with insights gained during class. On your document, record the date of your original and any revisions and keep both your original and revised summary in your tabbed notebook. (Or, you could revise your original in the “track changes” mode of MS Word and print that version.) Evidence of revision will be rewarded when your notebook is reviewed.

Save and bring all of your “big idea” summaries to class every Thursday. We will often work with them for a portion of the class, which should help you to revise and refine your content and expression. You should keep your summaries (originals and revised) in a tabbed notebook. Your notebook may be checked during class or collected by the instructor for a more detailed review, which is why you must bring it to every Thursday class. You should also keep a backup copy, paper or electronic, of all of your “big idea” work.

Quote of the Week: For most units (see calendar) you are expected to find a quotation that
1. is by one of the persons mentioned in the Nash (2001) chapter being read.
2. is not quoted by Nash, and
3. may help to illustrate one of the points made in your “big idea” summary (or that you found interesting for other reasons)
4. you cite fully and correctly using the APA style. (Students from non-social science-based majors may ask permission to use the official style manual of their major).
5. you explain in one or two sentences why you selected this quotation.
These quotes should be filed in the corresponding section/tab of your “big idea” notebook.

Evaluation and Grading:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Total Point Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSI Unit Quizzes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Idea Summaries (weekly)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Idea Notebook Reviews</td>
<td>1 or 2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10-20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quote of the Week</td>
<td>10</td>
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Total Possible Points: 240-250

Grade Calculation:

Total Points Earned

----------- X 100 = percentage score
Total Possible Points

Letter Grade Equivalents (- given at low end; + given at high end of each range)

A  91 - 100
B  81 - 90.9
C  71 - 80.9
D  65 - 70.9
E  below 65

Other factors: (Each may raise or lower final grade by 1/3.)

Class participation/engagement
Attendance
Other assignments

NOTE: I reserve the right to add assignments and quizzes as needed to improve and recognize learning and effort. I will not add major assignments (e.g., term paper).
Students with disabilities: SUNY Cortland is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

If you are a student with a disability and wish to request accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services located in B-40 Van Hoesen Hall or call (607) 753-2066. Any information regarding your disability will remain confidential. Because many accommodations require early planning, requests for accommodations will be reviewed in a timely manner.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The College is an academic community that values academic integrity and takes seriously its responsibility for upholding academic honesty. The instructor adheres strictly to the college policy on academic dishonesty. You are expected to read and follow this policy. (See College Handbook, [http://www.cortland.edu/handbook/handbook.pdf](http://www.cortland.edu/handbook/handbook.pdf)). Pay special attention to the three actions associated with plagiarism.

1) **Failure to cite sources or document ideas:** In preparing papers and other written work, students should cite, with page references or equivalent for electronic documents (see pp. 120-121, 213-214 in APA manual), any information not known before the age of 16. Hence most paragraphs will have at least one citation—even more when bits of information come from non-adjacent pages in the same source or from different sources. **Failure to cite sources** or (undocumented paraphrasing) (College Handbook, 2006, p. 50) is plagiarism. The more paragraphs you write without citing sources, the more likely you have committed plagiarism. If your citations have no page numbers (or comparable indicator for electronic sources), you have not cited sources or documented your ideas, which is plagiarism. Don’t take the risk.

2) **“Failure to use quotations marks:”** (SUNY Cortland College Handbook, 2006, p. 50) **When using three or more words in succession from a source, quotation marks and page specific citations are required.** Simply changing a word or two in a sentence does not make it your own. **“Failure to use… quotation marks, even if… [you cite the source], is plagiarism.”** (SUNY Cortland College Handbook, 2002, p. 49)

3) **False documentation:** Citing the incorrect source or pages within the source is false documentation, which is another form of plagiarism.

If I suspect plagiarism of any kind or if I simply want to learn more about topic or source, I may instruct you to provide me with a copy of your source(s). If you do not own the source or if it is not in the SUNY Cortland library, you are strongly advised to photocopy the pages from that source that you cited in your paper. For electronic sources, especially those without clear page numbers, you should keep a print copy of the source until such time as you have received your final letter grade for this course.

Why am I so strict? I strictly enforce the policy on academic dishonesty because

1. Following these documentation procedures gives credit to those who provided us with this information. That is kind as well as honest.
2. Following these documentation procedures makes it easier for your reader (including yourself, if you ever return to the topic of your paper) to learn more about the subject under discussion. You spare the person the need to begin from scratch. By providing page numbers, you let your reader go quickly to that point in the source. That is kind as well as honest.
3. Following these documentation procedures may “protect” you if you have obtained incorrect information from an otherwise reliable or appropriate source. If you are “wrong” because a leading authority had incorrect information, citing that source protects you from being the source of the error. (And when I am wrong, I am more likely to recognize my error if you have cited sources.)
4. Following these documentation procedures helps students do better research, which is a purpose of higher education.
5. Following these procedures helps you become a better writer by having to write your own sentences and to paraphrase the writing of others. That too is one of the goals of higher education.
6. By explaining and strictly enforcing these policies, I find that students in my courses rarely submit plagiarized papers. That’s good for all of us.
Other things you should know.
Because I take plagiarism so seriously and because I hold students to the above guidelines, students in my courses rarely plagiarize. If they do, they can count on being caught. Failure to cite sources is so easy to spot. Shifts in writing style, from students’ to other authors’, are easily detected when students fail to use quotation marks. False documentation, the most blatant form of plagiarism, is almost always associated with failure to use quotation marks and is equally easy to detect (especially because I am usually familiar with the sources students use).

As easy as it is to detect plagiarism, I would rather prevent it, than report it. That is the purpose of this lengthy treatment of the topic. Having given all these warnings and made clear what to do and not do, I have little patience with students who plagiarize. I will detect it and report it. As a punishment, I will likely settle for nothing less than failing the course, and it could be worse.

Other types of academic dishonesty, including cheating, are listed on page 50 of the College Handbook. Although you surely know about most (e.g., cheat sheets, copying, etc.), be sure to review these. Also remember that the instructor is the only person authorized to give information about the content of an examination or quiz. When students share information about a test with other students who have not yet taken the test, they are giving unauthorized information about the test and putting some students at an advantage over others. This is unfair and dishonest. You should not talk, even in a general way, about tests or quizzes with students who will or who might be taking the same or a similar test or quiz.

Approved style manual for written work: APA (5th ed.) except that every citation must include page references. Work that does not follow APA style may be returned for correction and penalized for being late or simply penalized one-third to one full letter grade. (REC 310 students from non-social science related majors e.g., English, art, philosophy, etc. may receive permission to use the format of their discipline.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of:</th>
<th>Tuesday (Quiz or topic)</th>
<th>Thursday Agenda</th>
<th>GNWD Reading (Callicott &amp; Nelson)</th>
<th>F&amp;E</th>
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<th>Reserve Notebook “E-reserves”</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 31</td>
<td>Course Intro</td>
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<td>Sep 28</td>
<td>SG 4</td>
<td>TBA Thoreau</td>
<td>Thoreau, pp. 31-47</td>
<td>144-157</td>
<td>133-171</td>
<td>Emerson, 35-51 Thoreau, 51-74 Cornell, 227-236</td>
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<td>Oct 5</td>
<td>SG 5 Thoreau</td>
<td>TBA Thoreau</td>
<td>Thoreau, pp. 31-47</td>
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<td>Emerson, 35-51 Thoreau, 51-74 Cornell, 227-236</td>
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<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>SG 9</td>
<td>TBA Thoreau</td>
<td>Thoreau, pp. 31-47</td>
<td>144-157</td>
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<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>SG 10</td>
<td>TBA Thoreau</td>
<td>Thoreau, pp. 31-47</td>
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<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>SG 11 (Chapter 13 only)</td>
<td>BIS (TBA) Thoreau</td>
<td>Thoreau, pp. 31-47</td>
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<td>Nov 23</td>
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