

II. Texts:

A. Required Readings: Your personal library is one of the most important tools of your education, and will be part of your life long after you leave Evergreen. We will be supplementing our texts because three of our anthologies are not longer in print. During the class you will be given handouts and other materials will be on reserve the library. Our goal will be to assemble an anthology and bibliography of poetry, stories, myths, essays, nature journals and books for lifelong use.

1. Nature Poetry:

Oliver, Mary, New and Selected Poems. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992. ISBN 0-8070-6819-5

2. Anthologies and Handbooks on Nature Writing

John Murry, *Writing about Nature: A Creative Guide*

3. Storytelling and Natural History

Helen Whybrow, and Will Rogers, *The Story Handbook: A Primer on Language and Storytelling for Land Conservationists*

4. Language, Theory, and Nature Essays

Abram, David. *The Spell of the Sensuous*. New York: Vintage, 1996.

Snyder, Gary. *The Practice of the Wild*. North Point Press, 1990. ISBN: 0865474540

B. Supplemental Readings: The following texts are optional, but will be referred to during the class. Some of them will be available in the bookstore or on reserve in the library. These are wonderful resources. Students taking the class for 8 credits are encouraged to consider buying two additional texts.

1. Out of Print: Three of our major anthologies are currently out of print, though you can still order them individually through most book distributors. Though copies of materials will be made available, you are encouraged to get copies for your personal library.

a. Bly, Robert W., *News of the Universe : Poems of Twofold Consciousness*. Sierra Club Books, 1995. ISBN: 0871563681.

b. Ross, Carolyn, *Writing Nature: An Ecological Reader For Writers*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995. ISBN: 0312103913.

c. Strauss, Susan. *The Passionate Fact: Storytelling in Natural History and Cultural Interpretation*, Colorado: North American Press, 1996. 1-55591-925-

2. Additional (Optional) texts:

** Limited copies are available in the TESC bookstore.

a. Poetry

** John Caddy, *Morning Earth: Field Notes in Poetry*

b. Anthologies and Handbooks on Nature Writing

** Finch, Robert, and John Elder (Editors)). *Norton Book of Nature Writing*. W.W. Norton & Company, 1990. ISBN: 0393027996.(QH 81.N67 1990b)

*Richard Mabey, *The Oxford Book of Nature Writing*

McEwen, Christian, and Mark Statman (Editors). *The Alphabet of the Trees: A Guide to Nature Writing. Teachers & Writers, 2000. ISBN: 0915924633*

Petersen, David H. Emerson Blake *Writing Naturally : A Down-To-Earth Guide to Nature Writing*, Johnson Books; ISBN: 1555662730.

**Steve Van Matre, *The Earth Speaks*

c. Storytelling and Natural History

**Kane, Sean, *Wisdom of the Mythtellers*

Grey Owl. *Sajo and the Beaver People*

d. Language, Theory, and Nature Essays

Ackerman, Diane. *A Natural History of the Senses*.

Anderson, Lorraine. *Sisters of the Earth: Women's Prose and Poetry About Nature*.

**C. G. Jung, ed. Meredith Sabini ., *The Earth Has a Soul: The Nature Writings of C.G. Jung*

**Hoff, Benjamin. *Singing Creek Where the Willows Grow: The Mystical Nature Diary of Opal Whitely*.

Hogan, Linda Hogan (Editor), Brenda Peterson (Editor). *The Sweet Breathing of Plants : Women Writing on the Green World*. North Point Press, 2001. ISBN: 0865475598

Hogan, Metzger, and Peterson. *Intimate Nature: The Bond Between Women and Animals*.

Roszak, T., Gomes M.E., and Kanner, A.D. (Eds.) *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books. 1995. 0-87156-406-8.

Snyder, Gary. *A Place in Space: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Watersheds*.

**David Rothenberg, Marta Ulvaeus, *Writing on Water*

**Williams, Terry Tempest, *Red*

III. Course Equivalencies: Students can receive a total of four quarter hours credit for college level work in literature, creative writing, or environmental studies.

IV. Learning Goals:

1. To gain an understanding, both conceptually and experientially, of the importance of connecting language, perception, and ecological awareness, and of the inseparability of mind and nature.
2. To experience the challenges of reading, understanding, talking, and writing about oral storytelling, textual, and cinematic representations of natural history and environmental studies.
3. To survey and develop an appreciation for the historic context, authors, and literature of nature writing, in poetry, prose, myth and story, and to develop an introductory knowledge of the literature and environmental studies.
4. To expand our understanding and practice of journaling, editing, revision, and various writing and storytelling techniques.
5. To explore the history of the human experience of nature and creativity, including indigenous animism/shamanism, mythology, and literature, as well as the historical and philosophical roots of our current ecological, social and psychological crises. To gain an understanding of new paradigms in science, philosophy and psychology which may help us resolve the old Western division between mind and world, psyche and nature.
7. To gain an understanding of a phenomenology of language, poetry, myth, psychological theories of the self, as well as in various environmental philosophies such as deep ecology, eco-feminism and social ecology. To examine and explore the strengths and possible limits of various theories. To understand some of the implications of these ideas applied to language, creativity, and creative writing.
8. To increase our personal awareness of our psychological and spiritual connection with the natural world and what it means to have a sense of the ecological Self. To explore our personal

embeddedness in the natural world, increase our sense of interdependence with other beings, both human and non-human, and explore our own boundaries and identifications with the natural world as well as the human world. To be able to draw more deeply from nature as a deep wellspring of wisdom and creativity both within us and around us.

Careful Description

Early in May, the oaks, hickories, maples, and other trees, just putting out amidst the pine woods around the pond, imparted a brightness like sunshine to the landscape, especially in cloudy days, as if the sun were breaking through mists and shining faintly on the hill-sides here and there. On the third or fourth day of May I saw a loon in the pond, and during the first week of the month I heard the whippoorwill, the brown-thrasher, the veery, the wood-pewee, the chewink, and other birds.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

V. Expectations:

- Faithfully attends and fully participates at all meetings, workshops, and seminars.
- Reads and responds to the texts faithfully in weekly seminar papers and discussions.
- Takes notes on class lectures and discussions, and completes all experiential writing workshops and exercises each week which connect theory to personal experience. These exercises will be done as inner work, writing activities, in dyads or in small groups. Place your notes and handouts for these workshops in your portfolio.
- Maintains a portfolio of class handouts, class notes (on lectures, workshops), papers, and cumulative work. These will be reviewed at the final evaluation conference.
- Successfully completes all individual or group projects, presentations, workshops, writings, or assignments on time. Note that 4 credits in 5 weeks of upper division work should involve 20 hours a week of work (on average), including class time; 8 credits involves 40 hours of work.

VI. Assignments:

A. Assignments: (4 & 8 Credits)

- 1) Reading response papers turned in promptly at each weekly seminar (1-2 pages, typed). These papers will allow you to: 1) comment upon the readings, and 2) summarize, reflect upon, and integrate program topics, themes, and issues. (See Guidelines to reading responses.)
- 2) A final draft, edited and revised during in-class writing workshops of: 1) either a personal essay (3-5 pages), or 2) 3-5 poems. These can be developed from writing workshops done in class.
- 3) Bring a favorite nature poem and poet to present during class. You must make copies for everyone.
- 4) The performance of a story, song, or other creative work during the last Tuesday of class.
- 5) Nature Journal. This is your chance to develop your personal relationship with nature work, or to work with assignments suggested by class readings. Choose a special place in a natural setting that you will get to know in depth - ecologically, psychologically and spiritually. Commit to spending at least 60 minutes there a week (this can be done in one 60 minute block, in two 30 minute periods, or so on. Each item in this journal must be dated. A handout with suggested meditations and perceptual awareness tools will be offered to you for your work with your relationship to your special place. Keep a journal of your observations and experience. Feel free to use artwork and poetry. You may also use suggestions from our texts to stimulate your writing.
- 6) Complete all in-class workshops and assignments.

B. Assignments: (8 Credits)

1. Complete all of the assignments (above),

2. Review and write a brief response to at least two additional texts that explore the themes of the class. These can be tied into your special project.
3. Complete a special project. Presentations on your work be due the Tuesday of class. The following options are available:

a.) Write a typed, double-spaced, research or reflective paper (5-7 pages). This paper may involve doing research on a particular author or work, or on some aspect of environmental education, nature writing, language and human creativity. You might explore some aspect of storytelling, mythology, a survey of natural history writing, or other areas of interest.

b.) A substantial artistic creative, or performance project. This may involve poetry readings, art work, storytelling, theatre, song writing, or a combination of artistic mediums that integrate your learning from the program.

c. A substantial creative writing piece (poetry, short story, or essay) that goes through several drafts and revisions with multiple readers, including work with the writing center and peers. You should be drawing inspiration from favorite authors, and exploring the genre or style you are working with.

d.) A community-oriented project such as connecting storytelling or poetry to environmental /social activism, an ecological restoration project or to an organization where you work.

e.) A curriculum project(for teachers). This project should incorporate some aspect of storytelling, literature, cultural studies, environmental education, or other topic, that you can incorporate in your school curriculum. See handout for guidelines in developing your curriculum.

f.) Other options can be developed. Please discuss your ideas with the instructor.

VII. Assignment Due Dates: See handouts for details.

Weeks 1-5: Reading responses and assignments are due at the beginning of each class. Assignments will be given each week.

Sign up for a day to present your nature poem in weeks 1-4.

Week 2: Special project or research topic statement (8 credits only.)

Week 3: First draft of writing project

Week 4: Tuesday: First draft of special project, if applicable (8 credits only)

Week 5 Tuesday: Final Portfolio and oral presentations due.

Special Project and presentation due (8 credits only.)

Thursday: Film Screening: Thomas Berry—The Great Story

Self and Faculty Evaluations (Three copies, signed.)

VIII. Class Portfolio:

Each student is required to keep a class portfolio throughout the class. This will be turned in at the end of the summer to be reviewed at evaluation conferences. Include your name and a table of contents.

Record the topic and date of each item in your portfolio. Each section should be arranged chronologically. The portfolio must be kept in a loose leaf three ring binder with dividers and should contain the following: Course syllabus, all class handouts.

Note: Date and chronologically order each entry.

1. Syllabus and class handouts.
2. Class notes: lectures, speakers, films, etc.

3. In-class writing workshops. (Date and title each entry)
4. Nature Journal (date each entry)
5. Seminar notes
6. Weekly reading responses to required texts. Follow format on reading response handout. (A section of reading notes is strongly recommended.)
7. Personal Essay or poetry: Final copy, early drafts, and editing workshop notes.
8. Planning notes for individual or group final presentation. (include planning, research & development notes; copies of all drafts, etc.)
9. Self and Faculty evaluations (Three signed copies on official forms at the end of the

(8 credits only)

10. Reading response for two additional texts.
11. Special Project and all notes. This project must be worth 4 additional credits, and must constitute half of your work in the class.

Rebecca Chamberlain, M.A., is a Northwest writer, storyteller, and educator, holds an M.A. in English Literature from the University of Washington with an emphasis in Medieval Literature, oral narrative, and Puget Sound Salish storytelling traditions. She teaches courses in literature, storytelling, writing, illuminated manuscripts, comparative mythology, and cultural studies.

Student: "How do you draw grass?"

Jenny Keller: "You need to ask the grass. Otherwise you miss out on all the things grass is."

Disclaimer: The following schedule is a general guide and is subject to revision.
