

**MOODLE SYLLABUS** 2016 September English 347 Off Campus Syllabus Overview

**CORNELL WILDERNESS TERM** Professor Leslie K. Hankins

English 347: Exploring Boundaries in the Arts and the Wild:  
Site-Writing and Light-Writing: Journaling, Journeying, Meditation,  
Inter-Arts, Writing, Photo/Journaling.

**NOTE: While on Campus we'll meet in Library 108 or my office.**



**1-347 at the Boundary Waters (Wilderness Field Station, Ely, Minnesota)**

Encounters with boundaries on the wild have shaped the boundaries of art and culture. What better way to study those encounters than on the boundary of the wilderness that inspired the writers and photographers? Therefore, the class will journey to the Boundary Waters of Minnesota, to the Coe College Wilderness Field Station, where we will immerse ourselves in the glorious September outdoors, study journals, literature and photography and consider the interplay between our own encounters with the wilderness and the artworks about the wilderness that we study. We will reflect upon art and meditation as ways of relating to the wilderness; to capture our own responses to the wilderness, we will keep journals/portfolios of projects involving writing, literary analysis, meditation, and photography (including a one-photo-a-day project inspired by Brandenburg's works). The class will consider photographers Jim Brandenburg, John Daido Loori and others who created art from their encounters with the wilderness. We will study the vibrant journals and paintings of Emily Carr, the Canadian wilderness writer and painter of the first half of the 20th century, and read fiction and essays by Thoreau and more contemporary fiction and essays by a variety of American women writers and discuss them over campfires and dinners, and by the lake. We will canoe around the Field Station on lovely Low Lake. You may be a seasoned camper, a neophyte, or something in between, but we will all work together to make the course and our trip, memorable as we interact with other courses at the Field Station for the Cornell Wilderness Term. The Field Station is primitive, rustic, and rather raw. Be ready to embrace the

absence of electricity, laptops, social media, cellphones, and the rest of the tech-distractions from full attention to *being*. We gain immersion in breathtaking beauty, stunning silence, physical challenges of hoisting and canoeing, and moments of sublime revelation—plus camaraderie. (“Wake up! Are those wolves howling?! There must be fifty of them!”)

### Extended Description & Introduction

How do we, as early 21<sup>st</sup> century American readers, encounter both the wilderness and the ideologies and fiction about encounters with the wilderness? I suspect that for many of us, our first encounters with the wilderness have been mediated by the screen, whether through TV documentaries or through Disney. Therefore, the course will begin by considering such spectator roles and a formative classic: Disney’s *Bambi*. What messages did we get about the wilderness from such sagas? What do we need to jettison to encounter the wilderness afresh? Or, perhaps we learned all we know about the wilderness from writers like Hemingway, or films such as *Deliverance*, and consider the wilderness a macho, or at least a male, terrain. Or, do we come to the wild from the tales of mastery and daring-do of trekkers who boast of exploits of mastery, of “conquering” rivers and peaks? How are we affected by such narratives of youthful able-bodied super-specimens? Did we learn of science studying the wild? Did we learn about Ecology and scientists and activists preserving the wilderness in elementary school? We’ll do some reading to de-center those perspectives to make room for other ones. Or, we may have formed our relationship to the wilderness partly through L.L. Bean, REI Outfitters, and the expedition industry with its catalogues and consumer lures. How do those portray the wilderness, and the human within it? Is it all about having the right outfit and equipment (not to mention being able to model it with a superbody, aged 17-30? Interesting choices of narratives!! Though we will respect and need key equipment for our trip (don’t forget the flashlights and raingear!), we will consider, too, how those outfitters, scientists, sportsmen, and animators shape contemporary perspectives on the wilderness



Rod MacIver watercolor

What other ways might there be to meet with the wilderness? We will consider such alternative practices as Zen meditation, including silence and sitting in stillness, and we will explore the practice of art-making, particularly journaling and photography, with its parallel focus on looking deeply. We will have a class on meditation from college chaplain, Reverend Catherine Quehl-Engel. And, we will consider intersections between the arts, such as the visual arts and/ literature, as another way of relating to the world of the wild. We are also open to music and dance (ecochoreography) as the spirit moves us. We will consider photographs and films by photographers and artists who approaches the wilderness with camera and paintbrush, such as Emily Carr, the brilliant Canadian wilderness writer and artist of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We will examine innovative contemporary boundary crossing interactive photographers Tokihiro Sato, nature writer/photographer Jim Brandenburg and Zen writer/photographer John Daido Looi. At the Boundary Waters, we will read journals, short stories and poetry primarily, immerse ourselves in the wilderness, track that immersion in journal/portfolio projects, and draft responses to the literature we read.

**Disabilities and Accommodation.** We would like all students to succeed at the college. If you have a disability that requires special accommodation, please visit the Cornell College registrar and the website about Disabilities Services; please alert the professor if you wish and consult the website if you think you require accommodation because of a disability. The student must have appropriate documentation on file at the Registrar's Office in order to be eligible for accommodation, and must request accommodation within the first three days of each term in order to be eligible for accommodation.

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**WEEK ONE:** Week One is planned to help us gather the materials we need and to prepare us for our trip up north to the Field Station. We will prepare by thinking about art and its meaning and value in culture (and in the wild), learning about meditation, looking at paintings and photography books and surfing the web for vital websites that will provide information and images that we can digest in the weeks ahead. And, we will plan and pack and prepare!

**Monday September 5: [at Cornell] Note: I am flying in MONDAY morning from a wedding. In case my flights go awry, I'll make alternative arrangements for the class. The Librarian, Jen Rouse, will arrange for the film screening if I'm stuck on the tarmac somewhere.**

**Afternoon:** 1-3 Beginnings. Let's start with the Disney film, *Bambi*, because, after all, for many of us, that was our first artistic impression of the wilderness. **LIBRARY 108**

Homework. Also, let's Do some investigatory sleuthing through wilderness catalogues & websites gear sources (such as Cabelas, REI, Patagonia, etc etc. and other materials. What messages about the wild do you get from each? Think about the way people are presented in the websites/catalogues. Take notes to share your insights with us all. What are the demographics? Consider gender, race, age, ability, weight, attractiveness, class or income level, etc. Think about how these sites populate the wild. *Science and the Wild* ; *Outfitters and the wild*: Prepare interview questions for Field Station cohorts in other classes.

Consider catalogues/websites; discuss the messages in catalogues and websites; begin brainstorming about this topic.] Using the articles as an inspiration, think of interview questions you might ask Field Station cohorts from other classes. Bring in a few questions to class tomorrow. Samples: What do you see as the role of the sciences and ecology? Public policy? The arts? What do you think is most important? Why?

What is your major? What do students think is perceived as more difficult: Ecological Science course, Ecological Public Policy Course; Ecological Arts course. Why?

Assign: **Assign:** On Moodle, Read "Bambi" by David Payne, a chapter in the book on Reserve, *From Mouse to Mermaid*. Also go to this website and read the short article:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/books/23bambi.html?\\_r=3&oref=slogin&oref=slogin&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/books/23bambi.html?_r=3&oref=slogin&oref=slogin&oref=slogin)

Jot down your first impression of *Bambi* as a child, and your observations now of the film as crafting attitudes towards the wild.

Read Kabat-Zinn sections to prepare for the meditation training by Chaplain Catherine Quehl-Engel

*Wherever You Go, There You are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life.*

New York: Hyperion Press, 1994. (and CDs on Reserve)

Especially: PART 2: The Heart of Practice, 103-169. Pay special attention to sitting, lying down, and walking meditation practices, and Lake Meditation.

Also on Reserve: Listen to the CD collection disks On Reserve in the Library that contains Mountain Meditation and Lake Meditation



**Assign:** *Ecocriticism Reader*, articles by Evernden, Rueckert and Le Guin. Also read Audre Lorde “Poetry is not a Luxury.” Think deeply about the relationship between the wild and art, and the arts and culture. What does art have to do with the wild?

**Tuesday Sept 6: [at Cornell]**

10:00 a.m. Introduction to meditation at Allee Chapel with Father Catherine.

12:30-3 Introduction to the course, discussing needed items, such as cameras, journals, and so on. Sample journals shown (not spiral books or flimsy short ones).

Discuss what a journal is (not a diary, but a thoughtful intersection between the personal and the academic. How is a journal like and unlike a series of papers? What does a journal allow a writer to do? What are the strengths of a good journal? What are the pitfalls of a weak journal? Talk about the arts and sciences and public policy and the WILD. Discuss *Bambi*.

**Screen:** *Chased By the Light* and slide show of *Looking for the Summer*.

**Assign:** journal entries: Write notes on *Bambi* and the articles. Consider how the film presents the wilderness and nature—you can flesh these out into journal entries later.

Assign: “Hull Speed Decreasing”



**Afternoon 1-3. discuss our cultural assumptions/ideologies of the wild.** Ecocriticism Articles and interview ideas. What is the wild? Whose wild? Discuss Cabelas, *Bambi*, outfitters, “Hull Speed Decreasing” (from MOODLE) and ideologies and expectations about being in the wild and encountering the field Station

**Wednesday Sept 7:**

**afternoon:** 1-3 meet in classroom. Discuss wilderness ideologies, *Bambi* entries, etc.

**Brainstorming:** Discuss ways film, video, camcorders, digital cameras, and other tools can shape your encounters with the wild. Consider ways to experiment with “fresh seeing” that bring your creativity to the wilderness.

**Inspiration from the Moving Camera:**

Go see on YouTube: John Daido Loori Roshi on ZEN PHOTOGRAPHY  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPR\\_5MvFIXU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPR_5MvFIXU)  
Take notes.

**Screen:** gorgeous trailer for John Daido Loori's *Water Speaking Water* film, go to:  
See youtube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyU9THYpbYA> on water

**Dance and film:** nature, art, and dance. Screen Maya Deren "Choreography for Camera"  
You may wish to write more if you are packed and organized for the trip!

### *Thinking ahead about Photography*

Recommended Assign: See *Chased by the Light* by Brandenburg: website : [YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3vW1kgIEnk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3vW1kgIEnk)  
Especially examine the Jim Brandenburg project, which inspired our class project!

See also Photographs by Tokihiro Sato Photo-Respiration. See Youtube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAvTajJCqbs> (In Japanese language)  
*Mirror in the Sea* may especially provide ideas for projects!

Journal Questions: what do art and meditation have in common? Journal about the meditation process so far. Do they give you ideas about what you would like to do in your own intersection of art and the wild?

**Assign:** Begin to read Thoreau *Walden* selections: "Solitude" "Brute Neighbors" "Higher Laws" and "Conclusion. & "Walking" Good reading for the van trip—or as you get settled in.

**Thursday September 8: Sign up for Presentations, individual and group.**

Pack! Get organized. Be sure all of your gear and class materials are manageable. Be packed by the evening, so you can get a good night's sleep and still be up at 5. You should be ready with all your gear, neatly organized, to be at the Commons circle by 5:45-6 a.m. **WE HAVE TO GET AN EARLY START SO WE DON'T FACE DRIVING IN DARK/STORMY CONDITIONS AND ARRIVING LATE AT THE FIELD STATION. SET ALARMS! ARRANGE WAKE UP CALLS. ]**

**Friday September 9 [DRIVE UP to Field Station] 10 hours. Whew!**

Meet absolutely no later than 6 a.m. at the Commons Loop. We would like to drive off at 6, and must pack the gear, so be early if possible, but for sure, don't be late. Bring \$\$ to pay for meals on the trek up, and credit cards or whatever to pay for anything you may wish to purchase at Cabelas, the outfitting store we stop at outside of the Twin Cities. (This is your chance to purchase that flashlight or headlamp or Nalgene bottle you may have neglected to pack.) Bring reading materials for the trip—or whatever. We will arrive (hopefully) around dinnertime and with luck dinner will be ready for us. If it is still light (if we are efficient in our leaving Cornell & driving) we can look around, and get settled in.

**Note:** while at the Field Station, times and assignments will be flexible. We may shift projects/assignments around due to weather and travel, and we aren't limited to the 9-11, 1-3 class times, so we can play around with those. We may break up class with canoe adventures, or

meditation experiments, or art times. We may schedule a day of total silence, if that seems promising. We'll see how it unfolds.

The schedule below is a draft because the weather day by day will re-arrange our plans. Meditation will be a part of various classes; perhaps we will meditate for 5 minutes at the beginning of class, or at break. We will regularly share our journal entries or ideas. Some days we may seize the weather and trek, and other days, we may do two class days in one if the weather is less beckoning. Please be flexible, and read ahead if you can.

#### **Saturday September 10: at Field Station**

Canoe training with Craig Allin & Andy McCullen

Class times variable depending on training. Pick out a few meditation spots that feel meaningful to you. Find a tree you really like. Meditate. Consider how you might devise a Paddling Meditation or a tree meditation.

#### **Sunday September 11:**

More canoe training and adventures

Read more Thoreau. Pick out and write about key passages and ideas.

Discuss Thoreau. Groups lead discussion.

Check out your meditation spots. Meditate solo and with group. Experiment with meditation practices such as walking meditation, paddling meditation, journaling meditation. Write in your journal. Share journal writings

### **WEEK TWO: SCHEDULING TENTATIVE!**

During our time at the Field Station, class will be 24/7 or somewhere in between. The schedule will vary daily depending on weather, class choices, and so on.

Discussions of Thoreau. Perhaps read some aloud. Do Kabat-Zinn meditations.

During our time up at the Field Station, we have scheduled a visit to the International Wolf Center, (exact date TBA)



We are also planning a drive/canoe trek into the actual BWCA for a day trip with a guide; only 9 people at a time, or 3 canoes, can be together within the BWCA. We plan to paddle and portage to go see the Hegman Lake pictographs, ancient paintings on cliffs, sacred to the Ojibwe people. On site we will be respectful, taking pictures or making sketches, but not using flash photography, and not touching the sites. Be aware of these sites as powerful portals across time.



**September 16: Full moon**

**PERHAPS MOONLIGHT CANOE AROUND LOW LAKE WEATHER PERMITTING.**

### **PRESENTATIONS/CAMPFIRES**

#### **LEADING THE CLASS IN DISCUSSION/INSIGHTS**

**Henry David Thoreau** each person will lead a discussion of a part of *WALDEN*. Choose passages for the class to read aloud and discuss in depth.

“Solitude” \_\_\_\_\_

“Brute Neighbors” \_\_\_\_\_

“Higher Laws” \_\_\_\_\_

“Conclusion” \_\_\_\_\_

“Walking” \_\_\_\_\_

**Emily Carr:** Each person will present on her paintings and her journals. Sign up to choose and present one painting and to read aloud and discuss selections from the journal.

**SOLO PRESENTATIONS:** Sign up to lead a discussion (campfire or after dinner or in class) on three of the following. If viable for the piece, we'll read it aloud before discussing it. It helps to have journaled about your plans for the presentation, and your reflections on the piece. Be prepared with detailed discussion questions and observations. We will begin each session by reading aloud the selection or portions of the selection.

**SELECTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:** *Sisters of the Earth: Women's Prose and Poetry about Nature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Ed. Lorraine Anderson. 1991, 2003.

Joy Harjo “Fire” (poem) & music from her CD, *Native Joy* (p. 3) \_\_\_\_\_

Opal Whiteley “The Joy Song of Nature” (diary fragment) (p. 7-9) \_\_\_\_\_

Zora Neale Hurston “The Pear Tree” (snippet from novel) (p. 12-14) \_\_\_\_\_

Sarah Orne Jewett “A White Heron” (p. 23-35) \_\_\_\_\_

Sally Carrighar “Home to the Wilderness” (p. 37-45) \_\_\_\_\_

Leslie Marmon Silko "Love Poem" (108) \_\_\_\_\_

Gretchen Legler "Gabimichigami" (from essay) (114-117) \_\_\_\_\_

Martha Reben "Night Song" (fragment) (144-5) \_\_\_\_\_

Ellen Meloy "The Angry Lunch Café" (161-5) \_\_\_\_\_

Julia Butterfly Hill "The Storm" (166-169) \_\_\_\_\_

Willa Cather "The Ancient People" (excerpt from novel) (174-185) \_\_\_\_\_

Edna Warner "Journal Entries" (186-191) \_\_\_\_\_

Mary Wilkins Freeman "The Balsam Fir" (212-222) \_\_\_\_\_

Diana Kappel-Smith "Dance of the Giants" (essay selection) (288-294) \_\_\_\_\_

Anne Labastille "Among my closest friends" (essay selection) (295-300) \_\_\_\_\_

Hildegard Flanner "The Old Cherry Tree" (300-310) \_\_\_\_\_

Mary Austin "The Last Antelope" (317-327) \_\_\_\_\_

Terry Tempest Williams "Clear Cut" (371-374) \_\_\_\_\_

Ursula Le Guin "May's Lion" (425-435) \_\_\_\_\_

Linda Hogan "What Holds the Water, What holds the Light" (403-408). \_\_\_\_\_

**Kim Blaeser Selected poems (these two can go together)**

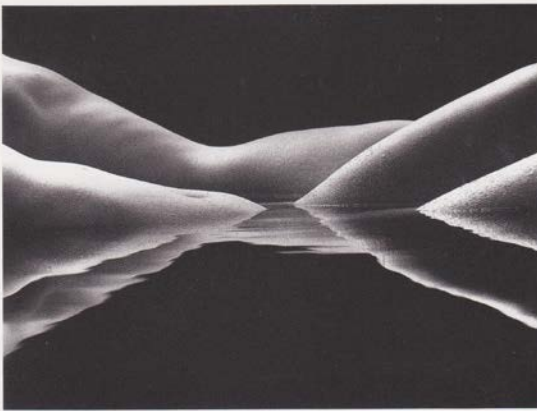
"Alaskan Mountain stories, Transfiguration" from *Trailing You*.  
\_\_\_\_\_

"zen for traveling bards" & "Of Landscape and Narrative" in *Absentee Indians & Other Poems*. \_\_\_\_\_





“



Art does not reproduce the visible, rather, it makes visible.  
*Paul Klee (1879–1940)*

”

## **Class Projects English 347:**

### **A Wilderness Journal, Creative and Critical**

-- must be thoughtful, thorough, and include key assignments:

1. a metacritical commentary/analysis of the journal samplings we see or read in class, in which you think critically about the types of journals & the choices the writer makes, and consider carefully the choices you make in yours. Reflect upon Emily Carr's choices, and the samples of journals in the classroom.
2. a Photo-journal-essay-- based on your camera's one-shot-a-day project. For this project, you choose one photograph per day. At the time you take the photograph, write up a dated journal entry about why you took that shot and your expectations for it, any thoughts you want to remember. What surrounded the photograph? What were the sounds, textures, feelings you could not capture on film? Write an essay about your overall photo-journal, incorporating all the information from your journals about each chosen photograph. Students will share these photo-essays the last day of class, along with selected passages from their journals and critical writings. For your essay, you should read and consider the insights of Brandenburg, Loori, and other photographers of the wild.
3. Write about one or more of Emily Carr's paintings, perhaps relating her painting to her writings in her journal and essays about art.
4. entry discussing outfitting websites and the wilderness as consumer product. Be specific. Who do they focus on? Whose wilderness do they represent? How does it mesh with the wilderness you experience? (This will also be the focus of the midterm)
5. entries about at least 3 of the selections from *Sisters*.
6. an entry looking deeply into selected passages Thoreau's *Walden* or his essay "Walking"
7. your own wilderness insights and experiences—at least 5 significant entries. You could include your experience with meditation, silence, and other wilderness experiences.
8. an entry on one Jim Brandenburg photograph.
9. an entry on Moon meditation, Tree meditation, paddle meditation
10. an entry on Loori photography and Zen Aesthetics
11. an entry on Tokihiro Sato, choosing one photograph

### **Grades:**

Midterm: 20%

Photo journal project: 30%

Journal: 30%

Class Engagement: 20% (includes presentations, camaraderie, support of peers/prof)

**GRADE STANDARDS and Guidelines** It is important to acknowledge that students earn their grades in college. They are not something the professor "gives" you. You may earn an A or an F or something in between; it depends upon your achievements, which often reflect your effort, though you are not graded for effort alone. You are expected to put solid intense effort into every course on the block plan, and to hand in all work at an acceptable level. You may not pass the

course if you are missing ANY assignments. You may fail the course with 2 or more absences. You cannot pass without doing all the work at a passing level, and you are expected to challenge yourself.

You may earn an **F** for poor or missing work, failure to carry your share of the load, plagiarism, absences, etc.

You may earn a **D** for slack or poor work that does not come up to the standard expectations.

You may earn a **C** for doing all the work, understanding all the readings, and contributing solid good work that is at the level of basic expectations for a demanding college course.

You may earn a **B** for very good work that exceeds expectations and demonstrates intellectual engagement, thorough understanding of all the readings and materials, and solid, positive contributions to class.

You may earn an **A** for superb work that excels beyond expectations and demonstrates impressive intellectual engagement, outstanding understanding of all readings and materials, and creative and dazzling initiative.

### Information on general Cornell College policies & English 347:

1.
  - a. Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Catalogue, under the heading "Academic Honesty."
2.
  - a. Students with disabilities:  
Students who need accommodations for learning disabilities must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see <http://cornellcollege.edu/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml>  
  
Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities services coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.  
  
At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

Meeting Cornell College Educational Priorities:

The English 347 course meets these objectives and more:

- *In both written and verbal form, effectively articulate, evaluate and critique various production concepts using professional language, theory and standards. (Communication, Reasoning)*

- *To develop and hone skills for reading and writing about challenging texts. (Inquiry, Communication, Reasoning)*
- 
- *See below for more information*

Educational Priorities	Students will...
<b>Knowledge</b>	integrate and apply knowledge from a focused area of study as well as a broad general education which includes disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences.
<b>Inquiry</b>	respond to the complexities of contemporary and enduring problems using information literacy tools, research skills, creative thinking, and analysis.
<b>Reasoning</b>	evaluate evidence; interpret data; and use logical, mathematical, and statistical problem-solving tools.
<b>Communication</b>	speak and write clearly, listen and read actively, and engage with others in productive dialogue.
	Through group projects and oral presentations about the literature we read, we hone skills of speaking and writing clearly, listening and reading actively, and engaging with others in productive dialogue.
<b>Intercultural Literacy</b>	connect with diverse ideas and with people whose experiences differ from their own and that may be separated from them by time, space, or culture.
	Reading the journals of Emily Carr, the poetry of Native American writers and exploring the works of photographers from diverse worlds will fulfill this goal.
<b>Ethical Behavior</b>	recognize personal, academic, and professional standards and act with integrity.
	Wilderness writings we read will advocate for acting with integrity in the world of the wild.
<b>Citizenship</b>	collaborate with others and contribute in their communities and the larger world.
	Group project build skills in collaboration that will bear fruit in future workplaces and roles as citizens



Educational Priorities	Students will...
<b>Vocation</b>	discover and prepare for the range of opportunities and challenges that await them beyond their college experience.
	Forging an intellectual community and working with others in productive ways build key skills. Likewise, using independent problem-solving and task-management to design and focus journals and projects prepares students to take charge of their education and will be useful in the work future.
<b>Well-Being</b>	<p>respect the ways physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual well-being may contribute to a balanced life.</p> <p>The experiences of the class as we balance work, appreciation of nature, and art, provide a meaningful model of a balanced life.</p>