

2022 Fall Semester
Southern University of Science and Technology
Nature, Wilderness and Civilization
Course Syllabus



注释：图片为莽措湖。高山拍摄。Mangcuo Lake Photo by Shan Gao

Instructor: Shan Gao
Teaching Assistant: Xueni Yang
Time: Mon. 8:00-12:10.
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Course Description

In this course, we will use cases studies to analyze the relationship between human beings and nature in the civilization of science and technology. We will introduce different theories in environmental humanities which emerged in the past decades in response to the changing relationship between human beings and increasingly serious environmental problems. Those theories include various schools in environmental ethics, environmental law, environmental aesthetics, environmental psychology and environmental sociology. We will discuss their theoretical interpretations and how their theories promote ecological practices and actions which are conducted by various kinds of social groups. Those practices and actions include ecological art action, nature education, ecological restoration and designing wilderness within the city.

Grading

1. Attendance 10%
2. Class Performance 10%
3. Reading Quizzes 20%
4. Short Response Essay 30%
5. Final Presentation 30%

Your final grade will be made up of five parts which include attendance, class participation in discussion, reading quizzes, short response essay and final presentation. Your grade for **class performance** is based on your participation in the discussion.

The reading quizzes will be given at the beginning of each class and it will take 10 minutes. The reading quizzes are made up of ten T or F questions. You are also supposed to turn in the short response essay before each class in English. In terms of the response essay, students need to focus on only one book chapters or research articles for that day. The reading quizzes are based on the assigned readings for that day.

The response essay is due before each class starts. You only need to select one reading to write the response essay. In your response essay, you need to address the following three questions: (1)What is the authors' main argument? (2) How did the paper contribute to your understanding of your subject? (3)Do you agree with the author's argument? Please write down your own argument.

Your final presentation can be one of the following three groups projects. (1) Interview with a scholar who has made contribution to our thinking of the relationship among nature, wilderness and civilization; (2) Interdisciplinary Reading. The group select one book from the class and read it with group members. Detailed reading notes will be your final project. (3) Research paper. You can choose to write a research paper with your group members together. In terms of the research paper topic, I will give you suggestions in the middle of this semester.

Reading Materials

All of the Readings will be sent to the blackboard for this class.

Required Books

1. Roderick Frazier Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Fifth edition, Yale University Press, 2014.
2. Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, Oxford University Press, 1949.
3. Eugene C. Hargrove, *Foundations of Environmental Ethics*, Prentice Hall, 1989.
4. Paul B. Thompson. Kirill O. Thompson, *Agricultural Ethics in East Asian Perspective: A Transpacific Dialogue*. Springer, 2018.

Selected Book Chapters or Research Articles

1. Emily Thomas, *The Meaning of Travel*, Oxford University Press, 2020.
2. Robert C. Solomon, *Spirituality for the Skeptic*, Oxford University Press, 2002.
3. David J. Chalmers, *Reality + Virtual Worlds and the Problems of Philosophy*, 2022.
4. Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, translated and edited by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas, 1996.
5. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Trans by Donald Nicholson-Smith, 1974.
6. Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, Sierra Club Books/San Francisco, 1977.
7. Yue Cao, Steve Carver, Rui Yang, "Mapping Wilderness in China", *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 2019.

Detailed Reading Schedule

1ST Class 9/26

Topic: Who am I? Perspectives from Space, Place and Spirituality

Readings:

1. Robert C. Solomon, *Spirituality for the Skeptic*, pp. 8-28.
2. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp. 229-292.

2nd Class 10/17

Topic: Wilderness Act, Spirituality and Conservation

Readings:

1. American Wilderness Act PDF
2. Roderick Frazier Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*
 - (1) Old world roots of Opinion (pp. 1-22)
 - (2) Henry David Thoreau: Philosopher (pp. 84-96)
 - (3) John Muir: Publicizer (pp. 122-141)
3. Laur Kiik, *Wilding the Ethnography of Conservation: Writing Nature's Value and Agency In*.
4. Yue Cao, Steve Carver, Rui Yang, "Mapping Wilderness in China".

3rd Class 10/31

Topic: Wilderness: Ethics, Aesthetics and Education

Guest Lecture: Dr. Qiushi Xu Soundscape in Wilderness

Readings:

1. Eugene Hargrove, Foundations of Environmental Ethics
(1) Chapter 3 Aesthetic and Scientific Attitudes
(2) Chapter 6 An Ontological Argument for Environmental Ethics
2. Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac, p. 201 Land Ethic
3. Holmes Rolston, The Wilderness Idea Reaffirmed.
4. Bernard L Krause, Wild Soundscape in the National Parks

4th Class 11/14

Topic: Wilderness: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Readings

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of Solitary Walker* (pp. 126-147).
2. Emily Thomas, *The Meaning of Travel*. Chapter 4 and Chapter 8
(4) Innate Ideas in Descartes, Locke and Cannibals
(5) Edmund Burke and Sublime Tourism
3. Helga Synnevag Lovoll, Knut-willy Sather and Mark Graves, Feeling at home in the Wilderness: environmental conditions, well-being and aesthetic experience, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2020.3.
4. Antonio Carnorrino, Green Spirituality and Physical Culture: Extreme Sports and Imagery of Wilderness.

5th Class 11/28

Topic: Agriculture: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Place

Readings

1. Paul B. Thompson. Agricultural Ethics in East Asian Perspective
(1) Agrarian Environmental Philosophy in an Inter-cultural Context (p. 1-13)
(2) Agrarian Tradition and Chinese Culture: An Interpretive Overview (p. 13-23)
2. Liu Chengji, The Agricultural Trait of Chinese Aesthetics and Its Manifestation in Landscape.
3. Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, chapter 2.
4. Xiaojun Yang, A Study on the Return of Local Emotions of Ancestor Worship: A Case Study of Dangjia Village in Hancheng City. *ICAESEE*, 2018.

6th Class 12/12

Topic: City, Virtual Reality and Space

Readings

1. Henri Lefebvre, Writings on Cities, Industrialization and Urbanization (pp.65-86)
2. Ingo Kowarik, Working Wilderness: A Promising Direction for Urban Green Spaces, Urban Architecture Frontiers, April 2021.
3. David J. Chalmers, Virtual Worlds and the Problems of Philosophy.
Chapter 1: Is this the Real Life?
Chapter 17: Can you lead a good life in a virtual world?

7th Class 12/26 Outdoor Hiking and Students' Presentation of Final Projects