



ESE 360 A SP19: Environmental Writing (Molbert, N)

Dashboard ► Courses ► ESE 360 A SP19 ► General Resources ► Course Information and Resources

Course Information and Resources



ESE 360: Environmental Writing

IMPORTANT: Please note the other course resources in the *Table of Contents* to the left.

[Course Overview](#) | [Course Outline](#) | [Grading](#)



In this course you will develop the capacity to write for a broad audience about environmental issues. Along the way, we will practice observing the world attentively and creatively, gathering information efficiently and reading other environmental writing critically. Through discussion, research and writing, you should develop sufficient expertise regarding each of the topics we investigate, in order to connect with a wide variety of audiences, including students, other members of the campus community and the general public.

Course Goals

- Isolate a particular argument of interest within a broader topic.
- Effectively present and push this argument in writing.
- Make attentive observations of the natural world and link these observations with larger trends, research and knowledge; you should be able to use observational research to generate topics of interest for future research and writing.
- Be able to respond to existing writing in an intelligent and careful manner, interpreting current environmental discourse accurately and incorporating this discourse into your own thinking and writing.
- Understand the discourse communities into which environmental writing fits.

Texts

There are no textbooks for this course. There will be assigned article readings throughout the course. All articles will be made available on the course website through direct links.

Course Outline

Week	Topics	Assignments
Orientation Week (January 7 - 13)	Course overview, syllabus review	Pre-Class Activity
Week 1 (January 14 - 20)	Connecting with Environmental Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build interest and investment in the course by exploring your relationship with writing and potential research topics. • Learn about the Natural History Project and complete first entry. 	Week 1 Discussion Writing Assignment 1 Natural History Project, Part 1: Freewriting and Observation I
Week 2 (January 21 - 27)	Argumentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and build on your understanding of the rhetorical tools and composition techniques used to make successful written arguments. • Look specifically at how successful environmentalist texts work and begin your own research. • Begin to think about and write Paper 1. 	Week 2 Discussion Writing Assignment 2 Natural History Project, Part 2: Species Research Paper 1 Assigned
Week 3 (January 28 - February 3)	Audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to think about audience with respect to environmental writing, getting to know some widely-read environmental publications. • Peer review and revise Paper 1. 	Week 3 Discussion Writing Assignment 3 Natural History Project, Part 3: Environmental Article Paper 1 Due
Week 4 (February 4 - 10)	Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss informational writing, looking for ways to engage and interest readers in texts that describe and profile locations and experts. • Begin to think about the process of conducting an interview and incorporating it into a written text. • Begin to think about and write Paper 2. 	Week 4 Discussion Writing Assignment 4 Natural History Project, Part 4: Freewriting and Observation II Paper 2 Assigned

<p>Week 5 (February 11 - 17)</p> <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct interviews and learn how to use them successfully to write an engaging and meaningful report. • Peer review and revise Paper 2. 	<p>Week 5 Discussion Writing Assignment 5 Natural History Project, Part 5: Photo Essay Paper 2 Due</p>
<p>Week 6 (February 18 - 24)</p> <p>Meditation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to contemplate the literary roots of environmental writing. • Students look at how creative essays on nature engage readers and address objectives studied in both the “argumentative” and “immersive” papers, though using different techniques. • Begin to think about and write Paper 3. 	<p>Week 6 Discussion Writing Assignment 6 Natural History Project, Part 6: Ecosystem Research Paper 3 Assigned</p>
<p>Week 7 (February 25 - March 3)</p> <p>Crafting Narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at how essay writers successfully weave descriptive detail, tools of rhetoric, fact and opinion into a cohesive “storyline.” • Peer review and revise your third and final paper. • Peer review and Revise Paper 3. 	<p>Week 7 Discussion Online Peer Review Writing Assignment 7 Natural History Project, Part 7: Annotated Bibliography Paper 3 Due</p>
<p>Week 8 (March 4 - 10)</p> <p>Multimedia Composing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about online and multimedia composition. • Consider how media may help or interfere with objectives unique to environmental writing. • Compose and submit a multimedia Wiki using text and information generated through the Natural History Project. 	<p>Writing Assignment 8 Natural History Project, Part 8: Final Wiki Project (due end of finals week)</p>

Weekly Format

Each week will provide learning objectives and an outline of the activities for that week with a list of all deadlines and corresponding point values for assignments. In a typical week, we will have a variety of writing assignments including discussions and written responses; you’ll also need to be working on larger papers throughout. Lecture material, composed of readings, PowerPoint lectures, and occasionally videos, should help with the writing process.

Writing Assignments

Weekly writing assignments constitute slightly longer, individual responses submitted to me for review. The goal of these responses is to help you to solidify your understanding of the material assigned for each week and to push you to generate material you might use as you write each paper. In the second week of each paper cycle, these assignments will take the form of revision plans, in which you discuss, in detail, how you plan to take apart and revise your paper-in-progress.

Natural History Project

This journal-style project will require you to do a variety of fun, low-stakes writing and multimedia activities. You'll generate material to compose an engaging and complete Wiki at the end of the semester (since we're looking to join a modern environmental conversation, it makes sense for us to use modern communication tools!) using media and text you have already composed. These small "logs" will be graded primarily on completion, and should help you maintain an ongoing creative practice. They will also encourage you to get to know your own natural environment.

Weekly Online Discussion

Class discussions are a major part of this course. The classroom discussion allows engagement with not only the material but with the perspectives and viewpoints of all the other students in the class. In the second week of each paper cycle, we will use the online discussion board to complete a peer review for a draft of each paper. Participation in the class discussion is mandatory and posts must be substantive and of significant quality. The objective is to engage with each week's topic and with other students in the weekly discussion, and to provide significant and meaningful constructive criticism when you read your partner's paper. Due to the organic nature of the conversation as it moves from week to week, unlike with other assignments late discussion posts may receive no credit.

Lessons

Within the lessons for each week, you'll find question/essay slides that require you to provide a brief response to the material. This will help me to check that you're doing the readings and should help you keep the writing process going. These will be graded on participation. Each complete response receives two points—late responses or incomplete responses receive one point, or half credit.

Papers

Over the course of 8 weeks, we will compose three papers of **at least 2,000 words**. Each of these will introduce you to a genre or style of writing that appears frequently in environmental contexts. Grading for these papers will be based on how well you fulfill the specific objectives stated in each paper prompt, as well as your general ability to fulfill the requirements of any well-written text: the content maintains a tangible sense of logic and clarity; it is mechanically competent and stylistically accurate (you may use MLA or APA citation styles as you like); there is a sense of importance associated with the text beyond that it's required for the course; and you have met the minimum word requirement.

Grading

Grades are accessible from the **Grades** link in the left sidebar under the **Administration** block of your home page.

Grading Distribution

Assignment	Points	Occurrences	Total
Pre-Class Activity: Introduce Yourself	10	1	10
Writing Assignments	10	8	80
Natural History Project	10	7	70
Weekly Online Discussion	10	7	70
Lessons	6	11	66
Papers	100	3	300
Final Project (Natural History Wiki)	100	1	100
Total			696

Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter Grade
93-100	A
90-92.99	A-
87-89.99	B+
83-86.99	B
80-82.99	B-
77-79.99	C+
73-76.99	C
70-72.99	C-
67-69.99	D+
63-66.99	D
60-62.99	D-
Below 60	F

Photo Credit: Blue Marble-2001-2002." 20 Dec. 2009. Wikipedia.org. 14 Jan. 2012.

Disability Accommodations

The University strives to make every practical effort to ensure that no person is denied educational access because of a disability. To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible at: 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, 333-4603, or email: disability@illinois.edu.