HRS 155: SPIRIT AND NATURE

Dr. Maria Jaoudi
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Office Hours: TU 11-1:30pm; M &W 3:00–5:00pm online; and by appointment

Course Description:
A comparative inquiry into the critical connection between religion and nature. Traditional views of selfhood, the Sacred, morality, and specific ecological issues such as energy consumption will be examined through representative sources in the world’s religious traditions.

Learning Outcomes:
Students explain, organize, discuss, and interpret the topics listed in the syllabus. Students comprehend the connection between the language of religious traditions and environmental concerns. Issues addressed in Spirit and Nature serve each student well in terms of personal, professional, and global citizenship responsibilities. Regarding the student’s critical thinking, he/she develops analytical evaluative skills, making it possible to interpret diverse views of selfhood, morality, and the sacred. The multicultural range of texts for the course satisfies the department and university’s mission of educating globally informed citizens.

In this online learning course students practice reading and study skills and, with assistance from the professor, improve critical thinking and questioning abilities. With face-to-face and online contact with the professor, and with testing, students will be able to interact, understand and integrate the reading, research, and films for the course into a lifetime of intellectual exploration.

Required Texts:

J. Baird Callicott. Earth’s Insights: A Multicultural Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback


Gai-fu Feng and Jane English. Tao Te Ching (only the edition with the Jacob Needleman Introduction)

Thich Nhat Hanh. The Sun My Heart

Maria Jaoudi. Medieval and Renaissance Spirituality
Required Films

Students are responsible for films assigned. Purchase/rent through Netflix, e.g.

A selection of films are available at the Library Media Center.

Baraka. Director, Ron Fricke

Princess Mononoke. Director, Hayao Miyasaki

Whale Rider. Director, Niki Caro

Check HRS 155 SacCT for Reading and Note-taking Strategies

Recommended Texts:

Thomas Berry. The Great Work: Our Way into the Future

Christopher Chapple. Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions

J. M. Coetzee. Elizabeth Costello

Ursula Goodenough. The Sacred Depths of Nature

Maria Jaoudi. Christian Mysticism: East & West

John Daido Loori. Teachings of the Earth: Zen and the Environment

John Muir, Travels in Alaska

Mary Oliver, New and Selected Poems: Volume I

Bron Taylor, Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature: Volumes I & II

The following texts are published through Harvard University Press; new issues are forthcoming in other world traditions:

Judaism and Ecolog
Christianity and Ecology
Islam and Ecology
Buddhism and Ecology
Daoism and Ecology
Confucianism and Ecology
Indigenous Tradition and Ecology
Hinduism and Ecology

Schedule of Classes/Assignments

Week 1

Running with the Wolves

Myths and Stories: The Bounty of the Wild Archetype
Singing Over the Bones Pages 1-20
The Howl: Resurrection of the Wild 21-34
The Beginning Initiation 35-69

Film: Baraka Directed by Ron Fricke
Lecture on SacCT under “Film Resources”

Earth’s Insights

Chapter 1 The Notion of and Need for Environmental Ethics
Chapter 3 Environmental Attitudes and Values in South Asian Intellectual Traditions

Week 2

Running with the Wolves

The Retrieval of Intuition Pages 70-110
The Mate: Union with the Other 111-126

Week 3
FIRST EXAM
Wednesday 13 June 12:30am – Thursday 14 June 11:00pm
On the First Exam: All the material from Weeks 1-2

Film: *Princess Mononoke*  Director by Hayao Miyazaki
Lecture on SacCT under “Film Resources”

Running with the Wolves

Life/Death/Life Cycle  Pages 127-163
Belonging as Blessing  164-196
The Wild Flesh  197-212
Self-preservation  213-254
Homing: Returning to Oneself  255-296

Earth’s Insights
Chapter 4  *Traditional East Asian Deep Ecology*
Chapter 5  *Ecological Insights in East Asian Buddhism*
Chapter 6  *Far Western Environmental Ethics*
Chapter 7  *South American Eco-Eroticism*
Chapter 8  *African Biocommunitarianism and Australian Dreamtime*

Week 4

MIDTERM EXAM
Wednesday 20 June 12:30am – Thursday 21 June 11:00pm
On the Second Exam: All the material from Week 3

The Sun My Heart

Introduction
Sunshine and Green Leaves
The Dance of Bees
The Universe in a Speck of Dust
Cutting the Net of Birth & Death
Look Deeply at Your Hand

Week 5

THIRD EXAM
Wednesday 27 June 12:30 am – Thursday 28 June 11:00 pm
Only the book: *The Sun My Heart*
Tao Te Ching
Read the entire text including an in-depth study of Jacob Needleman’s Introduction

Medieval and Renaissance Spirituality
Chapter 3 The Jewish Mystical View: The Kabbalah
Chapter 6 Religion and Ecology: Hildegard of Bingen
Chapter 7 Islamic Love Mysticism: Rab’a and Rumi

Earth’s Insights
Chapter 2 The Historical Roots of Western European Environmental Attitudes and Values
Chapter 9 A Postmodern Evolutionary-Ecological Environmental Ethic

Running with the Wolves
Clear Water: Nourishing the Creative Life Pages 297-333
Heat: Retrieving a Sacred Sexuality 334-345
The Boundaries of Rage and Forgiveness 346-373
Battle Scars 374-386
Finding Love 387-456

Film: Whale Rider Directed by Niki Caro
Lecture on SacCT under “Film Resources”

Week 6

Running with the Wolves
The Deep Song Pages 456-461
The Wolf’s Eyelash 462-465
Story as Medicine 466-473

Earth’s Insights
Chapter 10  Traditional Environmental Ethics in Action

FINAL EXAM
Thursday 5 July 12:30am – Friday 6 July 11:00pm
On the Final Exam: All the material from Week 5 -6.
Remember, The Sun My Heart was on the Third Exam.

Course Policy for Dr. Jaoudi’s HRS Courses

Intellectual exploration is encouraged: The professor is available for additionally scheduled Office Hours for student reflections, discussions, and questions on the reading and film assignments.

Students are responsible for reading assignments, lecture materials, exams, and films, depending on the class syllabus.

Reminder: An online class demands even more self-motivation and discipline than a face-to-face class. For example, there is no professor standing in person reminding students about an exam; students have to remind themselves of the details of the class conveyed through the syllabus and SacCT. Because many of us are frequently online, there may be an automatic reflex to peruse written instructions. Therefore, be mindful, the online class is different from browsing the net. Enjoy your studies, and be aware of the fact that student success is determined online primarily by student commitment and circumspection.

There are four on-line exams; see the Syllabus Schedule. The exams are not cumulative. For example, exam #2 begins where the previous exam ends.

Each on-line exam contains multiple choice and true/false questions based on ideas and vocabulary obtained from notes on lectures, class discussions, hand-outs, reading assignments, and films, depending on the course content. Each exam contains 30-35 questions. Please check your Syllabus on SacCT for the exact on-line exam times and dates.
For one-on-one walk-in and by appointment tutoring help with SacCT, contact the Student Technology Center at stc@csus.edu/telephone (916) 278-2364/Academic Computing Resources building Room 3007.

*****Please read the following carefully: Students are required to take the Exams in the Student Technology Center insuring assistance with any technology issues. If a student does not take the Exams at STC, he/she takes full responsibility to resolve any technical issues on their own. Do not contact the professor concerning any technological problems, if you did not take the exam in the Student Technology Center.

It is the student’s responsibility to remember answers given to the online test questions, in order to benefit from the responses after the exam.

There are no make-up exams; if an exam is not taken, the student is automatically assigned an F grade. Therefore, make sure the exact dates and times of exams are duly noted.

There is no extra credit.

At no time is it appropriate to ask the professor to increase a grade in order to accommodate an individual desire for a higher GPA without matching grade performance. A student may drop themselves from the class during the official student drop period. After the official student drop period ends, any drops, withdrawals, or incompletes, will only be considered for faculty signature, if there is documented evidence of an unforeseen emergency, death, or surgery. Invalid reasons include: Not being able to keep up with the reading, receiving a poor grade on an exam(s), work schedule, moving to an apartment, or going on vacation.

Students with disabilities who require special accommodation must provide disability documentation at SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008 (916) 278-6955. Students with special testing needs must provide the appropriate forms at least two weeks prior to an exam in order to schedule with the Testing Center.

In HRS 152, HRS 155, and HRS 183, each exam is 1/4 of the grade.