

## English 370/570 “Literary Field Studies” Spring 2011

Instructor: Dr. Corey Lewis  
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Office hours: tues/wed/thurs 9-10 am  
and by Appointment

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### Course Description:

*Although we are currently engaged in reading the stories of others, we cannot escape the fact that we are also writing our own, inscribing ourselves onto the land for future generations to read. The real question for those of us who have read the trail is: What kind of story do we wish to tell? Will it be a story of continued ignorance, conquest, and degradation, a heroic tragedy in which all the characters die in the end? Or will we choose to walk a different path and enact a different story, one of understanding, restraint, and hope? The curious thing about such stories is that because we believe in them and enact them in the world, they have an uncanny tendency to come true. One day we will have to explain this truth to our children and justify why we chose to write the story they will be forced to live.*  
- Corey Lee Lewis, Reading the Trail

In this course, we will explore both, works of regional literature, and our local landscapes, examining in particular the complex relationship between literary works, human culture, and the natural world. From Mary Austin’s desert country in southern California and John Muir’s glacially polished high Sierra, all the way to the dystopian and utopian Californias of the future, envisioned by Octavia Butler and Ernest Callenbach, our readings promise to take us on both intellectual and physical journeys. We will gain familiarity with a number of major schools of theoretical analysis while focusing on “interdisciplinary field-based” methods of interpretation, as we read the work of these, and other, regional writers. Thus, in addition to traditional modes of instruction, response and discussion, we will also take several field study trips to local areas of interest that correspond with our course texts. Regardless of where we find ourselves, in the classroom, library, or field, we will continuously explore the ways in which extra-textual environments affect writers and the production of written texts, as well as how written texts affect individual readers, collective cultures, and the environment itself.

### Course Goals:

- to provide an understanding and appreciation of our Western literary tradition and landscape, and the inter-connecting issues affecting both
- to improve methods of literary analysis, interdisciplinary exploration, and writing
- to provide an engaging and challenging educational experience that empowers students to move beyond the classroom and instructor

### Required Texts:

*Reading the Trail.* By Corey Lewis

*The Land of Little Rain.* By Mary Austin

*My First Summer in the Sierra.* By John Muir

*The Parable of the Sower.* By Octavia Butler

*Ishmael.* By Daniel Quinn

*Ecotopia.* By Ernest Callenbach

*Turtle Island.* By Gary Snyder

In addition: English 570 Students are Required to have:

*The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* by David Korten.

**Attendance Policy:**

Although I do not take regular attendance, you are expected to attend, be prepared for, and participate in all scheduled classes, and I will take attendance from time to time. (I do reserve the right to institute an attendance policy if I deem it necessary). If you should miss a class for some reason it is your responsibility to see me prior to, or immediately following, your absence to make up on any missed work; daily work done in class or that was due on a missed day cannot be made up, however. And, reading quizzes are given quite often at the beginning of class, so absences or late attendance will cause you to miss these. Absences, therefore, will significantly affect your participation and daily work grades. Attendance is required for ALL Field Trips and attendance will be taken; your final letter grade will be lowered by one letter for each missed trip. (see the Field-Based Classes description for more details; a make-up assignment can be completed to replace one missed field trip, but it is extensive).

**Basic Description of Assignments and Grading:**

Reading and Thinking: This course requires a fair amount of reading (what some students might describe as “insurmountable mountains of it”!). And, many of the texts will also require quite a bit of intellectual work to understand and analyze. It is ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE that you keep up with the reading schedule. If you fall behind, do not read, or read at a slower pace than the class, you will miss out on most of our class discussions and work, even though you are present. Reading quizzes, which are given fairly often, make up part of your 20% participation grade.

Daily Work and Participation 20%: this includes attendance, participation in group work and class discussions, and daily assignments, and reading quizzes, that will be picked up periodically and graded on a credit/no credit basis; daily assignments can be handwritten and will be assigned during the previous class.

Undergraduate Presentations: As part of your participation grade, you will give a brief (5 minute) synopsis of your final paper.

Graduate Student Presentations: As part of your daily work grade, you will give a brief (10 minute) synopsis of your final paper. In addition, you will select and sign up for 1 presentation (about 15 minutes long) where you will provide a synopsis of a section of Korten’s book and how it applies to what we are reading at the time.

**Reading Response Papers: 40%**

Reading Response Papers, written in response to course readings, are due periodically throughout the semester. Each one is graded on a credit/no credit basis, and must be between 2-3 pages, with fewer than 3 sentence level errors per page, and thesis driven in order to receive credit. Graduate students are required to complete all of these; for Undergraduates, these will be graded on a self-paced study option, where you get to choose which grade you want to earn, and how many papers you want to write. You will not be allowed to revise and turn position papers back in for credit, however; so, they must be of acceptable quality the first time they are handed in.

There are 7 position papers total: (2 during section I, 2 during section II, and 3 during section III).

You must get credit for 3 papers total (1 from each section) to pass: If you get credit for 3 Grade = D

If you get credit for 4, Grade = C. If you get credit for 6, Grade = B. If you get credit for 7, Grade = A

Final Paper 40%: 6- 8 pages, (grad students 15-20 pgs) analysis of, and response to, a course text(s) or theme, or discussion of pedagogy, or ecocritical scholarship, with a clear demonstration of its significance to the extra-textual world, the “So What?” question.

**How to Submit your work:**

Reading Response Papers and your Final Paper should be typed, double spaced, using approximately one inch margins. Number the pages; this can be done with a blue or black ink pen. Your name and your class should appear on the top left hand corner of the first page. I **do not** accept written work via email, but do accept papers in my mailbox in the English Dept. office, or on my door.

### **Late Assignment Policy:**

Papers are due at the beginning of class on the scheduled due date, unless we make alternative arrangements prior to the due date. As a general rule, **no late papers will be accepted resulting in an F on that paper.** If you are aware of a problem in meeting a deadline, it is your responsibility to speak with me **before** the paper is due, in order to make other arrangements. (In VERY RARE cases I have accepted later papers before, but always with a severe penalty on the final grade.)

### **Formal Documentation Styles**

In this course we will use the Modern Language Association's (MLA) style for citing and documenting all sources. Refer to an MLA handbook in the library for directions on MLA style or go to [MLA.org](http://MLA.org). Should you wish to use some other formal documentation method (APA, etc.) see me in person for permission before writing your paper.

### **Field Trips**

There are 2 Required Field Components associated with this course. These Field-Based components have been designed to replace regularly scheduled on-campus classes in order to engage in Field-Based methods of literary interpretation and other forms of experiential education. Thus, as a formal part of the course, attendance is mandatory. Make every necessary effort now to schedule and keep these dates open; if you have a serious conflict with these field dates, you should drop this course now and take it during another semester when your schedule permits. Your final grade in the course will be lowered one letter for each missed field trip. If you have a documented disability or any other concern that may impact your participation in the field components, see me during the first 2 weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate accommodations. (If for some unavoidable reason you miss a field study component, see the make-up assignment listed below)

*All Field Classes will take place as scheduled, regardless of weather conditions.  
NO EXCEPTIONS!*

**Meet at Center Circle, HSU Campus, 8:50-9:00 AM for BOTH Field Days.**

### **Required Field Components:**

Date: Saturday, February 26

Time: From HSU, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Location: Patrick's Point State Park, Historic Sumeg Village and Agate Beach

What: Read Lewis chapter 6, and the field study packet. Introduction to field-based methods for interdisciplinary literary studies and local ecosystems and issues.

Date: Saturday, April 2

Time: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Location: Arcata Educational Farm

What: Read the field study packet. Continued field-based literary study, interpretation of Butler's work and exploration of local environmental issues, and service project.

### **What to Bring to Each Required Field Trip:**

1. A small backpack or daypack to carry all your stuff in.
2. Layered clothing for variable weather, and that can get dirty (prepare for rain, cold, and heat)
3. A journal or notebook and several pens and/or pencils
4. The course books, or packet, we are reading at that time in the semester (I'll remind you which ones)
5. a plastic trash sack and a towel to sit on
6. A sack lunch and 2 full water bottles, and any other snacks you may need.  
(No drugs or alcohol are allowed on University field trips)
7. Any medication that you might need (allergies, cold, etc.)
8. Optional items: a camera, pocket knife, binoculars, field guides of your own.
9. No dogs, un-enrolled students, kids, ipods/mp3 players, or other toys, please.

## Make-Up Assignment

You are required to attend ALL field classes, for the ENTIRETY, of each class. Failure to attend, will reduce your final letter grade one letter for EACH absence. So, make arrangements NOW to attend ALL field classes, or DROP this class NOW. Should you miss a field class due to some un-planned emergency, you may make up ONE of the field classes with the following assignment:

1. find a local environmental group that leads similar outings. (I suggest joining the student Natural Resource Club for a Saturday restoration project, the Naturalist Club for a survivalist outing, a Birding trip at the Arcata Marsh, etc) You must get approval for your activity from ME for it to count for credit, so check with me BEFORE you go.
2. While on the outing, compose 2 separate field journal entries, using any strategy you like, (see chapter 6 in *Reading the Trail* for ideas) or simply free-writing. However, they should be separate entries, that either use different techniques for journaling, or focus on different parts of the environment or different species.
3. Compose a 3-4 page paper in which you tell the story of your outing, what you did and how it connects to our course readings. This informal paper, then, should use your own experiences, observations and ideas to comment on, and respond to, some element of our course readings for that part of the semester. Select a theme/image/idea/passage etc. from one or more of our course texts that connects closely with your field experience and use one to enlighten the other.
4. You have 1 week after missing a field class to choose your outing and get approval from me for it. Then you will have 1 more week following your own field trip outing to write the make-up paper and turn it in to me.

## The Writing Center

The writing center free for all HSU students for help on any kind of writing, for any class or purpose, at any stage of the writing process. You are strongly encouraged to take your papers there, especially if you receive a “no credit” on a position paper.

## Formal Documentation Styles and Plagiarism

In this course we will use the Modern Language Association’s (MLA) style for citing and documenting all sources. You may refer to an MLA handbook in the library for directions on MLA style or go to the MLA website at [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org) and click on MLA Style. Standard requirements for academic honesty and avoiding plagiarism will be upheld in this course; if you have questions, ask BEFORE turning work in, but for now consider the following: Any time you use anyone else’s words (either a paper, paragraph, sentence, or short fragment) and do not give credit to the original author you are committing plagiarism. Depending on the severity of the offense you may receive an “F” on a plagiarized paper, or even an “F” in the course and have charges of academic dishonesty brought against you if you plagiarize.

## ASLE: Association for the Study of Literature and Environment

Although a wide number of useful resources could be listed here, the main one you should know is ASLE, the professional scholarly association for Ecocriticism. Check out their website at [www.asle.org](http://www.asle.org) They have a wide variety of useful tools for you, including bibliographies of environmental literature by subject, information on literary theory, on graduate schools, and on places to publish and present your work. You should also be familiar with their journal ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment, which is located in our library PN48.I58

## English 370/570 Semester Schedule

Our semester, like the four directions and seasons, is broken up into four distinct sections or eras:

- I. Packing for the Journey:** During this initial period, we will be packing a number of different tools and pieces of equipment into our backpacks for the journey ahead, learning a variety of useful theories and methods for examining literature, culture and ecology. This is a time for taking clear and detailed notes, doing library and internet research, defining terms and theories, and asking questions—in short, a time to prepare for the arduous journey ahead.
- II. On the Path, In the Present:** During this part of our journey, we will learn more about ecological literacy and begin reading and analyzing the interconnections between texts, places and their people. Now is the time for us to put our tools to use, to pull out our notes and research from our packs and apply it to the texts in front of us.
- III. The Trail Ahead:** At this stage in the journey, as the path crests, we will look ahead at a few eco-regional visions of the future and study the various mythopoetic attempts of authors to get there. Here we will continue to put the tools we have brought with us to use, but now we will increasingly be looking for connections between the texts we have read, and the places we have been.
- IV. Coming Home Again:** Just as when we return home from any long journey, this stage of the Hero’s quest requires us to bring our own stories, perceptions and insights back and to share them with others, as we celebrate and remember the way we have come. This is a time for putting all of our notes, thoughts and research together, as we write and present our final papers to each other.

Every Assignment for the entire semester is listed here so check this schedule several times per week. Reading assignments are listed as “R-“, Writing assignments as “W-“ and should be completed before class begins on the day

| <b><u>I. Packing for the Journey</u></b>   |   |          |  |
|--|---|----------|--|
| TU<br>Jan 18   | Class Introduction<br>Active reading strategies, intro to eco-lit   | TH<br>20 | Creation Stories<br>R- Lewis “Pen and the Sword” handout                     |
| TU<br>Jan 25   | Lit theory<br>See Handout for Reading                               | TH<br>27 | Field Based Ecocriticism<br>R- Lewis chaps 1-2, Final Paper assignment sheet |
| TU<br>Feb 1  | Quinn<br>R- Quinn book 1 thru 3<br>W- Literary Theory Papers Due    | TH<br>3  | Quinn<br>R- Quinn book 4 thru 8  |
| TU<br>Feb 8  | No Class<br>R – Finish Quinn  | TH<br>10 | Quinn<br>W – Quinn response papers due<br>Grad students present on Korten?   |
| <b><u>II. On the Path,<br/>In the Present</u></b>                                  |   |          |  |
| TU<br>Feb 15   | Austin:<br>R - intro thru the scavengers, Lewis chap 3              | TH<br>17 | Austin:<br>R - pocket hunter thru basket maker, and Lewis chap 4             |
| TU<br>Feb 22   | Austin<br>R - basket maker to end<br>W – Austin response papers due | TH<br>24 | Muir<br>R – Muir intro thru chap 3   |
| <b>Saturday February 26 Field Component<br/>Patrick’s Point 9:00 am to 4:00 pm</b> |   |          | R – Lewis chap 6, and Field Study Packet handed out in class                 |
| TU<br>March 1  | Muir<br>R – chap 4 thru 7, Lewis chap 5                             | TH<br>3  | No Class<br>R- Finish Muir   |

listed. Reading quizzes will be given periodically without notice so keep up on the readings.

|                   |   |          |  |
|-------------------|---|----------|--|
|                   | <b><u>III. The Trail Ahead</u></b>  |          |  |
| TU<br>March 8     | Muir<br>W – Muir Response Papers Due  | TH<br>10 | Snyder<br>R - Snyder pages 1-45, Lewis chap 7  |
| TU<br>March<br>15 | Spring Break  | TH<br>17 | Spring Break   |
| TU<br>March<br>22 | Snyder<br>R - Snyder 46-88 and Lewis chap 8   | TH<br>24 | Snyder<br>R - 91-end<br>W – Snyder Response Papers Due                               |
| TU<br>March<br>29 | Butler<br>R - Butler 1 thru 13  | TH<br>31 | No Class: Caesar Chavez Day<br>R - Butler 14 thru 20                                 |
|                   | <b>Saturday April 2 Field Component<br/>Arcata Ed Farm 9:00 am to 4:00 pm</b>                         |          | R – Field Study Packet handed out in class   |
| TU<br>April 5     | Butler<br>R- 21 to end<br>W – Butler Response Papers Due  | TH<br>7  | Callenbach<br>R- beginning up to “unsporting life”                                   |
| TU<br>April 12    | Final Paper<br>W – 1 pg overview of 2 possible final paper topics<br>Grad students present on Korten? | TH<br>14 | Callenbach<br>R – Finish Callenbach  |
| TU<br>April 19    | Callenbach<br>W – Callenbach Response Papers Due  | TH<br>21 | Ecocriticism and Education<br>R – Lewis chaps 9-10<br>W – 1-2 pg response to reading |
|                   | <b><u>IV. Coming Home Again</u></b>   |          |  |
| TU<br>April 26    | Final Paper Workshop/ presentation sign up<br>W – rough working draft of final paper                  | TH<br>28 | No Class<br>W – work on final paper  |
| TU<br>May 3       | Presentations   | TH<br>5  | Presentations<br><u>W – Final Papers Due</u>   |
| TU<br>May 10      | Finals Week<br>We will not use our final exam time unless we fall behind schedule and need to         | TH<br>12 | Finals Week  |