

Landmark College Summer Study Abroad Program 2019
LIT2023 Environmental Lit. - Writing the Wild in Scotland
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“To know fully even one field or one land is a lifetime's experience. In the world of poetic experience it is depth that counts, not width. A gap in a hedge, a smooth rock surfacing a narrow lane, a view of a woody meadow, the stream at the junction of four small fields - these are as much as a man can fully experience.” Patrick Kavanagh

COURSE DESCRIPTION

There are two main emphases of this **3-credit** course. One focuses on reading and analyzing works from the genre known as Environmental Literature. The other stresses writing about the natural environment as a source for exposition and journal-based writing. The course examines the techniques environmental writers employ in their craft, and introduces some of the modes of criticism which frequently are applied to environmental literature. Students will read a variety of exemplary essays, short fiction and poetry by such 20th/21st century UK writers as Kathleen Jamie, Paul Kingsnorth, Robert Macfarlane, and Jay Griffiths, and drawing from these foundational readings will begin to develop their own distinctive nature writing voices. Thematically, students will investigate Western cultural paradigms and ecological thought related to human and non-human **“eco-wildness”** through the lens of environmental literature, and will cover such topics as biophilia, wonderment and enchantment, re-wilding, toponymy, and sense of place. A significant portion of this course will be spent outdoors exploring local ecosystems; reading maps; journaling; using close observation skills, and investigating regional land use practices.

Prerequisites: Full-time status in the Landmark College credit program, and successful completion of WRT1011, and WRT1021.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Engage with a variety and volume of reading which demands sustained critical thinking and abstract reasoning.
- Integrate information drawn from textual readings, close observation, experiential learning, independent research, and class discussion into a variety of written expression such as: journal entries, creative non-fiction pieces, and academic exposition.
- Demonstrate ability to see events, issues, and problems from perspectives other than one's own, and to discuss them and write about them.
- Present before the class a coherent narrative that enhances our understanding of a variety of literary, cultural, and ecological interpretations of "wildness".
- Investigate a variety of critical models, styles and techniques common to contemporary environmental literature.

GRADING CRITERIA

Category of Assignment	Specific Assessment	Weight
Observation/Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Journal entries (3)• Short investigatory paper (1)• Small-group presentation (1)	30%
Analysis Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poem analysis paper (1)• Final analysis/def. paper (1)	25%
Critical Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quizzes or study questions on readings (3)• Focused discussions of rds.	25%
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessed (3) times, and discussed during student/instructor conf.	20%

Writing Projects: (due dates subject to change)

- A. "Recognizing Wildness" - short paper on "Wildness in Edges" - due 7/11
- B. "Wildness and Our Biophilic Ties" - poem analysis paper - due 7/15
- C. Small Group Presentations: Re-wilding; Bewildering; Wonderment; Enchantment; Children; and Hope" (notes to be submitted) - due 7/19
- D. Final analysis/definition paper - due 7/26

OTHER EXPECTATIONS

Critical Reading: This is a reading-intensive course, and although most (but not all) of the assigned readings are relatively brief, students are expected to read each piece actively and deeply.

Journal Entries: Students will be asked to write three journal entries based on both personal and whole-group encounters with the natural world while in Skye, Eigg and Edinburgh. Journal entries will be entered by hand in the field, and then later transcribed electronically.

Final Analysis/Definition Paper: Upon completion of the 3-week course, students will be asked to submit an analysis/definition paper in which the concept of *eco-wildness* is critically analyzed and defined. The expected outcome is a rigorous, five-page academic essay.

Attendance: Attendance and participation are considered vital for the successful completion of this course. Students receive **3 credits** for work that would normally be distributed throughout a 15-week semester, which means that they are expected to devote a considerable amount of time and effort to the assigned work (especially out in the field). Any “extenuating circumstances” which may prevent a student from attending a class or field trip must be discussed with the academic director and/or program director **before** the absence occurs. Outside of these “extenuating circumstances”, which will be assessed on an individual basis as they may arise, one absence from the course will result in academic probation, and a second absence may warrant the student’s withdrawal from the course.

Engagement: Active participation and appropriate deportment in the course are expected, which means that students must be on time, reasonably alert, prepared with homework, field notebook, and other gear appropriate to being out-of-doors in all types of weather. They need to be positively engaged in class and group meetings (indoors and out), and productive (completing work as required and according to deadlines, writing in the field, taking the initiative to participate in small group discussions and individual conferences, offering suggestions, asking questions, and/or asking for help - when needed).

Required Text and Materials:

- Text: Course Pack for LIT2023 Environmental Lit. (Summer Study Abroad – Scotland) available in the Landmark College bookstore.
- Journal: Students are expected to purchase a simple, lined journal in which to record hand-written observations while in the field.