

TEACHING GUIDE FOR: ECOCRITICISM IN POPULAR CULTURE

Subject identification

Lecturer: Rosa Moreno Redondo

Credits: 6 ECTS (total 150 hours)

Teaching language: ENGLISH

Teaching period and schedule: Second semester (13th February to 29th May), Wednesdays from 10 to 12.

Contextualization

Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the environment. Its interdisciplinary approach provides the perfect framework to explore the global ecological situation as represented in popular culture at the present moment.

The course will focus on the ecocritical interpretation of diverse materials from the 21st century belonging to different spheres of popular culture, from comic books to videogames, literature and cinema to name but a few. The main objective of the course is to analyze the representations of the environment in these cultural products, and discuss the possible effect of these representations on the general public.

Students will be able to practice the basic structure of academic papers in English and learn the techniques for presenting them orally in class. They will also be provided with the basic tools for debating their arguments during the practical part of the sessions. Each lesson will be divided in two parts: first, the presentation of theoretical contents for each discipline, followed by oral discussions where students will be able to state their views and opinions on the materials provided. There will also be sessions devoted entirely to the students' presentations.

Requirements

Students should have a good command of English in order to follow the lessons and work with the materials at home, although they will improve their skills throughout the course.

Skills

After the course, students should possess the following skills:

Specific:

- Ability to understand, interpret and analyze different texts in English from an ecocritical perspective.

Generic:

- Ability to communicate ideas and opinions in English in a formal writing style.
- Ability to communicate ideas and opinions in English using a formal oral structure.
- Ability to debate objectively – and respectfully – in English.
- Ability to work as part of a team and to pool the group's ideas.

Content

Week 1: Brief introduction to Ecocriticism

Week 2: Environmental discourse in the news. Introduction of debating techniques in English and discussion of the portrayal of the environment in the news through selected articles.

Week 3: Ecomusicology. We will discuss this new critical musical movement and have a look at examples of eco protest and environmentalism in music.

Week 4: “Green” videogames. We will discuss the construction of a natural conscience through players’ choices and the reformulation of games to convey eco-friendly messages.

Week 5: Introduction to academic writing and the structure of presentations.

Week 6: Students will give short presentations based on their research of a selected music piece dealing with the environment, or a “green” videogame.

Week 7: Comic books as a mirror for the ecological crisis. We will discuss the effectiveness of illustration to represent environmentalism and ecological issues.

Week 8: “EnviroTV”. We will discuss green themes in TV shows, from children’s cartoons to popular series.

Week 9: Academic essays (part 2). The structure of presentations (part 2). Students will work in groups with a project of their choice.

Week 10: Students will present their group projects based on a selected comic book / graphic novel or TV show.

Week 11: Nature in cinema. We will discuss the relationship human-nature in movies and consider animal representations in documentaries.

Week 12: Students will debate their views on a selected movie or documentary previously seen at home.

Week 13: Literature and the environment. We will discuss the relationship of humans with the environment and human – animal relationships as represented in literature.

Week 14 (assessment, longer session): Students will present their individual projects based on an ecocritical reading of a selected literary work. There will be questions and a brief discussion after each presentation.

Teaching methodology

In-work class activities

Modality	Name	Type. Group.	Description
Lectures	Lectures and participation	Big group	
Workshops	Practice sessions	Big group	
Presentations	Presentations	Big group	

Distance education work activities

Modality	Name	Type. Group.	Description
Self-study	Review, research and homework	Individual and group activities	

Workload estimate

Modality	Name	Hours	ECTS	%
Lectures and practical sessions	Lectures, practice and presentations	30	1.2	20

Self-study	Review and research	60	2.4	40
Independent activities	Reading and watching materials	45	1.8	30
Group project	Teamwork	15	0.6	10
Total		150	6	100

Student learning assessment

- Initial oral presentation + academic paper (Week 6): 20%
- Group oral presentation + academic paper (Week 10): 30%
- Final individual oral presentation + academic paper (Weeks 14-15): 40%
- Participation in class: 10%

Resources, bibliography and additional documentation

Basic bibliography

The lessons will follow a dossier that students can photocopy. Students will also be provided with a selection of texts on a weekly basis.

Complementary bibliography

Bailey, Stephen 2011. *Academic Writing. A Handbook for International Students*. London and New York: Routledge.

Garrard, Greg 2011. *Ecocriticism*. London and New York: Routledge.

Garrard, Greg (ed.) 2014. *The Oxford Handbook of Ecocriticism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Meyers, Alan. *Essays to Research Papers*. New York: Longman Academic Writing Series. Pearson Education.

Murphy, Raymond. 2012. *English Grammar in Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vince, Michael. *First Certificate Language Practice*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.

Lecturers' office hours

Office/Location	Week day/s	Office hours	Contact details
Arxiduc Lluís Salvador*	Mondays	14.30 to 15.30	Telephone: 971172012
*only through appointment	Thursdays	16.30 to 17.30	E-mail: rosa.moreno@uib.es