Without a complex knowledge of one’s place, and the faithfulness to one’s place on which such knowledge depends, it is inevitable that the place will be used carelessly, and eventually destroyed.

Wendell Berry, “The Regional Motive”

Instructor: Maureen Schirack
Email: mschirac@kent.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

Texts: Silent Spring by Rachel Carson
Desert Solitaire by Edward Abbey
My Year of Meats by Ruth L. Ozeki

Course Description:

This course will focus on the connection and relationship between humans and their environments. In the next 15 weeks, we will be building our knowledge of how our identity—both the physical and mental aspects of who we are—are bound up in place. In reading the three texts listed above, we will be focusing on three areas regarding place—environmental ethics, bioregionalism, and consumerism. Using a variety of materials from a range of writings by historical and contemporary naturalists, poets, and writers, my hope is that you will greatly expand your knowledge of these diverse areas and build your ideas about the significance and interconnectedness of place. The writings we will be reading from will present you with a plethora of perspectives and ideas that I hope will push the boundaries of our thinking about
landscape and nature and our understanding of the cultural kinship between human identity and ecological awareness. Looking at ways in which landscape and social justice issues intersect is at the foundation of our inquiry. What are our moral responsibilities in relation to the natural world, the earth, other species, and future generations? We will consider the many dimensions of ecological crisis and examine carefully a number of important contemporary issues in environmental ethics. I hope that as we strive to develop a critical awareness and engagement with traditions and views that might be different than our own, we form an understanding of the role of landscape in our lives.

The course will focus on critical inquiry, on questioning and gathering the information necessary to hypothesize answers to important questions and explicate a point of view or create an argument. We will be working on response and reflection, vetting sources and acquiring credible evidence and making sense out of information in a way that persuades your audience. The course will also emphasize the value of considering multiple points of view as a route to forming one’s own opinions.

This course is designed around three key components that I feel are necessary in order to help you develop as a critical thinker: READING, WRITING, and SPEAKING. Language is the medium for the exchange of ideas, and these three components provide the way in which you shape language both from and for your own experience. Your active participation—participation in which you are encouraged to engage ideas from both the readings and your life into class discussions and writings—is essential for a dynamic academic environment.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

- **Rhetorical Knowledge**—By the end of their Tier I writing course, students should be able to recognize the elements that inform rhetorical situations. This understanding should enable them to produce texts that
  - Have a clear purpose
  - Respond to the needs of intended audiences
  - Assume an appropriate stance
  - Adopt an appropriate voice, tone, style, and level of formality
  - Use appropriate conventions of format and structure

In addition, by the end of the Tier II writing course, students should be able to
  - Analyze argumentative strategies
  - Employ appropriate argumentative strategies in their writing
• **Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing**—Throughout the Tier II writing course, students should build upon these foundational outcomes from the Tier I course:
  o Use reading and writing for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating
  o Analyze relationships among writer, text, and audience in various kinds of texts
  o Use various critical thinking strategies to analyze texts
In addition, by the end of the Tier II course, students should be able to
  o Find and evaluate appropriate material from digital and print sources, and/or field data
  o Analyze and critique sources in their writing
  o Juxtapose and integrate ideas and arguments from sources
  o Develop a clear line of argument that incorporates ideas and evidence from sources

• **Knowledge of Composing Processes**—Throughout the Tier II writing course, students should build upon these foundational outcomes from the Tier I course:
  o Understand writing as a series of steps that includes generating ideas and text, drafting, revising, and editing
  o Recognize that writing is a flexible, recursive process
  o Apply this understanding and recognition to produce successive drafts of increasing quality

• **Collaboration**—Throughout the Tier II writing course, students should build upon these foundational outcomes from the Tier I course:
  o Work with others to improve their own and others’ texts
  o Balance the advantages of relying on others with taking responsibility for their own work

• **Knowledge of Conventions**—Throughout the Tier II writing course, students should build upon these foundational outcomes from the Tier I writing course:
  o Employ appropriate conventions for structure, paragraphing, mechanics, and format
  o Acknowledge the work of others when appropriate
  o Use a standard documentation format as needed
  o Control syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
In addition, by the end of the Tier II writing course, students should be able to
  o Employ appropriate textual conventions for incorporating ideas from sources, e.g., introducing and incorporating quotations; quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing

• **Composing in Digital Environments**—Throughout the Tier II writing course, students should build upon the foundational outcomes from the Tier I writing course. Developments in digital technology are expanding our understanding of "writing." To the extent that technology is available and appropriate, by the end of their Tier I writing course students should be able to
  o Understand the possibilities of digital media/technologies for composing and publishing texts
Use digital environments to support writing tasks such as drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and sharing texts. In addition, by the end of the Tier II writing course, students should be able to:

- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from various sources, including scholarly library databases, other official databases (e.g., federal government databases), and informal Internet sources.

- **Composing in Multimodal Documents**—Like traditional written communication, multimodal texts and composing practices make meaning rhetorically, through conventions and for specific audiences, purposes, and contexts. By the end of the Tier II writing course, students should be able to:
  - Analyze and critique multimodal texts
  - Employ multiple modes of representation rhetorically in their own composing

**Course Requirements:**

**Participation and Class-work:** Class participation is a high priority in this course. Just showing up to class will not be enough; you will also need to actively participate. Here are some ways to show that you are actively participating in class: come to class prepared, do in-class activities, engage in discussions (this includes remaining attentive even if you don’t feel comfortable speaking), contribute positively to the learning of your classmates, provide relevant and productive feedback on peer response days, take notes, ask questions, and visit the Writing Center.

**Peer Reviews:** You will engage in peer review sessions during the drafting of each of the three major assignments. These peer review sessions will provide you with valuable audience reaction and feedback. They will also help develop your evaluation skills, which will aid you in your own revising and editing. **If you do not bring a draft of your essay to a peer review session, you will receive an unexcused absence for that day since you will not have any work to do in class.**

These sessions are very important for developing your critical thinking and writing skills. **If you miss a peer review session, you can make it up by engaging in a full 45-minute session at the Writing Center within one week of the missed peer review.** Ask your tutor to email me a session report to receive credit. It is your responsibility to verify that I have received the tutor’s report.
**Formal Writing Assignments:** You will be writing three researched essays 7 pages in length for the semester. The essays will come from the three assigned texts for the course. In addition, you will be required to incorporate sources / evidence that will come from many of the essays and articles we will be reading and discussing in the beginning of the course and from books on reserve at the library.

**Zotero Account:** The art of summary is an important rhetorical device that will be reflected in your annotated bibliography through Zotero. Enabling readers to identify the research process and your understanding of an author’s argument are necessary tools for academic writing. Further information about how to put your bibliography together will be discussed in class.

**Quizzes:** A number of quizzes will be given throughout the semester to make sure you are keeping up with the reading. The quizzes are not just a way of showing that you have read the material, but they will ask that you challenge ideas in the readings. In the event that you are absent for a quiz, you will not be able to make it up. The format will be essay-type questions that will be based on your reading assignments.

**Response Papers:** Throughout the semester, we will be viewing a number of documentaries and doing some in-class reading. At times, I will ask that you write a one-page response for those days. In lieu of a quiz, a response paper might be requested to cover assigned readings.

**Books on Reserve:** I have set aside a number of books on reserve at the library (Student Resource Center) that I would suggest you become familiar with as they could prove important sources for your essays.

**Policies and Other Pertinent Information:**

Essay papers must be turned in on their due date. **NO LATE ESSAYS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** If you anticipate problems meeting a deadline, you may discuss receiving an extension from me **before** the assignment is due. It is important that you take responsibility to meet deadlines; this is a life skill you should be perfecting in college.
Unexcused Absence and Tardy Policy: Attendance is required because it is important. Anyone not coming to class is not taking the same course as everyone else. I understand that sometimes life can get in the way, so you will be allowed three unexcused absences (without explanation) throughout the semester. You will receive an unexcused absence if you fail to bring the required documents to class on a peer review day.

Your final grade will be lowered by one grade (B- to C+, A to A-, etc.) for each unexcused absence past the allotted three. After six or more unexcused absences, you risk failing the course. You will not be able to make up work done in class, and it is your responsibility to find a classmate to tell you what was covered in class. If you are absent, you need to email me your homework (mschirac@kent.edu) by the beginning of that class session or it will not be counted. Being absent does not give you an automatic extension or excuse you from work due that day.

Excessive tardiness may bring the absence policy into play—regular late arrivals can be counted as absences. This policy will be enacted entirely at the instructor’s discretion.

Excused Absence Policy: According to University Policy 3342-2-01.2, “Legitimate reasons for absence include, for example, death in the immediate family, religious observance, academic field trips, and participation in an approved concert or athletic event, and direct participation in university disciplinary hearings.” Such absences are considered excused, and thus do not result in the use of one of your three unexcused absences as long as the following requirements are fulfilled:

1. If the absence is planned, you must submit an official letter/note/memo to me from the sponsor of the event (i.e. sports event, field trips, etc.) before the absence. You must also submit all due assignments on time. Failure to follow these requirements will result in an unexcused absence and any assignments missed will be considered late and not be accepted.

2. If the absence is unplanned (medical emergency or death in the immediate family), you must give me notice of your situation as soon as possible, and all due assignments must be submitted on time (if any are due) – assignment extensions due to extreme situations will be rare and require that you contact me as soon as possible to discuss your options. You must submit an official notice to me as proof of the situation upon your return to class. Doctor’s notes must state that a medical emergency/illness prevented you from attending class (as per University policy). Appointments, health center receipts, etc. do not excuse you from class. Failure to follow these requirements will result in an unexcused absence and any assignments will be considered late and not accepted.
Cell Phone Policy:
Out of respect for your classmates and me, please turn your phones to silent and do not text during class. If you receive a call you need to take, please leave the room quietly.

Computers and Other Distractions Policy: I expect you to remain engaged in class. Thus, if you are using laptops or iPads for non-class activities, texting in class, or engaging in other activities not related to class activities (e.g. disruptive talking, sleeping, etc.), I reserve the right to mark you absent (unexcused) because you are not engaged in class.

Academic Honesty: Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense. Cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the work or for the entire course. Repeat offenses result in dismissal from the University. University guidelines require that all infractions be reported to the Student Conduct Officer on our campus.

Students with Disabilities: University policy 3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-244-5047 or visit http://stark.kent.edu/student/resources/accessibility.cfm for more information on registration procedures).

Classes Canceled – Campus Closings: Announcements of class cancellations and/or campus closings will be made on the campus home page. In the case of an emergency, weather-related or otherwise, please check the web page at stark.kent.edu for information on the buildings and times of the closing. While information may be broadcast by radio and television, this should be confirmed by the web page, which is the official announcement of the campus and which will be the information used to determine issues related to student attendance, rescheduling of tests, and other concerns.

If you are considering withdrawing from this course, please consult with a staff member in the Student Services Office, 134 Main Hall. Withdrawal from a course can
affect financial aid, student status, or progress within your major. For withdrawal deadlines, please refer to http://www.registrars.kent.edu/home/TermUpdate/sche_adj.htm.

Writing Center: The Writing Center is a free service to help students become stronger writers. It is a place for students to talk with outside readers about their work, both early on when they are still generating and considering ideas, as well as later during the drafting and revising stages. The Writing Center’s staff of peer tutors is specially trained to help students identify their writing needs and to offer insight, feedback, and support. We also offer a wide range of informational writing pamphlets, both online and in print. The Writing Center is located in Main Hall, Rm. #202, and is open for both walk-ins and appointments. See our website for details, http://www.stark.kent.edu/student/resources/writing/index.cfm, or call us at 330-244-329.

Course Requirements Grade Allocations and Grade Breakdown:

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essays</td>
<td>300 points (3 @ 100 points each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>20 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>20 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zotero Account</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92 - 90%</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>89 - 88%</td>
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<td>82 - 80%</td>
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