

Reading the Landscape



of Wild Oregon

Requires independent preparatory study over the summer leading to a six-day wilderness experience the week before fall classes

LA 465/565 Advanced Landscape Ecology • Fall 2014 • 4 Credits • P/NP

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Prerequisite: Permission of instructor; some ecology background recommended.

This course explores ideas, experiences and ecology of wildness and wilderness. It culminates in a group backcountry experience from Sunday 9/21 – Friday 9/26 as we explore and interpret the landscape of Oregon’s Kalmiopsis wilderness.

We will engage in a variety of activities to sharpen our skills at understanding and “reading” the landscape -- investigating the interwoven patterns and processes of the landscape and how they are expressed at different spatial and temporal scales and in the context of human experience. We will consider landscape history and human societies to understand how past events have shaped the landscape we see today, and how today's activities shape the landscape of the future. In the evenings we will take time to reflect on the meaning of wilderness and other wild places, and of how culture and ecology interact to create places, using the pre-trip assignments.

Prerequisite: *Permission of instructor. Enrollment limited to 11 students.* Selection criteria include level of ecological background and relevant educational goals and directions. Participants must be in adequate physical condition for highly active hiking and camping. Interested students should contact the instructor to get their names on an initial interest list. Be sure to leave a phone number and email address.

Course Fee: There is a course fee of ~\$100 to cover such expenses as van rental, campground and trail user fees, and materials and supplies for field work. This fee will be billed directly through UO tuition. Because space is limited, registration requires responsibility: the course fee may not be refundable if a cancellation is made during the month prior to the trip and no replacement student can be found.

Course Format:

We will explore an area of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness in Southern Oregon that includes the Illinois River and portions of the 2002 Bisquit Fire. Specific activities will depend in part on student interests, and on where our discoveries lead us. Course goals include:

- Sharpen perceptual skills to recognize relationships of landform, vegetation and ecological processes
- Examine the meanings and values of wildness and wilderness as individuals and for society through reading, reflection and experience
- Understand how life history strategies of different species interact through processes of competition, dispersal, succession and disturbance to create, maintain and change ecosystems
- Enhance observation and awareness skills through processes of discovery
- Study the interactions of natural disturbances, human impacts, and land management
- Develop orienteering skills -- using compasses, maps and air photos to identify and arrive at places of special interest

The trip should not be overly strenuous for active individuals in good shape. If you are not, then getting into shape, breaking in new boots, etc. may be necessary to ensure you can comfortably keep up with the group. Safety is of the utmost importance. Each individual will be expected to act in the best interest of the group through care and caution, and so as to enhance the safety and enjoyment of the rest of the group. Any student who wishes to participate in the class and has a documented disability or other concerns about the trip should contact the instructor. Students are required to provide their own equipment as specified by the instructor to ensure comfort and safety.

Student Responsibilities:

- Attend an information meeting and an additional organizational meeting during spring term.
- Perform assigned readings over the summer and complete a series of short written assignments based on readings and experiential exercises
- Submit a research paper on a topic of your choice prior to the start of class (see below) and present your findings during the field trip
- Participate fully in group activities, meal and trip preparation, etc.
- Supply yourselves with all necessary gear for camping and backpacking. We will create gear groups to coordinate shared equipment such as tents, and food groups for stoves and meals.
- Engage in low-impact hiking and camping
- Act responsibly and respectfully at all times
- Attend a final potluck/slide sharing/final exam during the 2nd week of fall term.

Logistics

We will depart Sunday morning and return Friday evening. We will camp five nights in the backcountry of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness of the Siskiyou Mountains in southwest Oregon.

Preparatory Assignments

Each student will complete a set of short preparatory assignments over the summer according to a self-established schedule. The assignments involve reading, experiential exercises and writing short essays on topics related to wilderness and wildness, including specific explorations of the Klamath-Siskiyou Ecoregion.

Landscape Investigations Research paper

Each student will be responsible for researching a selected topic for which they will become the resident expert on the trip. During the class we will pool our knowledge to better understand the patterns and processes around us. We will coordinate topics as a group so that we cover key issues, such as:

- Geology, soils and topography
- Climate and weather
- Hydrology
- River, stream and lake ecology
- Native American landscape history
- Post-Euro-American settlement land use, land management and cultural history
- Recreational impacts (hiking, camping, horses, low impact approaches)
- Wilderness legislation, perceptions or aesthetics
- Rare and endangered species
- Vegetation zones and classification
- Paleovegetation
- Vegetation dynamics, including fire
- Specific local ecosystems and plant/animal communities (e.g., serpentine communities)
- Air photo interpretation (current and historical)

Each student will prepare the following:

- A 5-10 page paper on their selected topic plus handouts submitted one week prior to the first day of class. The paper should be well written and concise. Link your topic to the landscape we'll visit as much as you can, and provide a creative, synthetic analysis that applies your topic to class goals.
- An annotated bibliography of materials used in the paper
- Supplementary materials, maps, diagrams, short excerpts, etc. (two copies)

READINGS AND RESERVE

LA 465/565 Advanced Landscape Ecology • Bart Johnson
Dept of Landscape Architecture • University of Oregon

Required textbooks:

Wallace, David Rains. 2003. *The Klamath Knot: Explorations of Myth and Evolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Twentieth Anniversary Edition. 167 pp. QH105.C2W344

Adams, Cass, ed. 1996. *The soul unearthed: celebrating wildness and personal renewal through nature*. New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam. BL65.N35 S68 2002

LA 465/565 Course Reader on Blackboard. *You should download all materials and organize them in a 3-ring notebook using the file "1-LA 565 reader organization.doc"*

Recommended textbook (with required readings)

Basso, Keith. 1996. *Wisdom sits in places: landscape and language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. PM2583 .B39 1996

Books on AAA Reserve with excerpts in the Class Reader

Observing Place

Paetzel, Mary. 1998. *Spirit of the Siskiyou : the journals of a mountain naturalist*. Corvallis : Oregon State University Press. QH104.5.S545 P24 1998.

Cronon, William. 1996. *The trouble with wilderness; or, getting back to the wrong nature*. P. 69-90, In, W. Cronon ed., *Uncommon ground : rethinking the human place in nature*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. GE195 .U53 1996

Oates, David. 2003. *Paradise wild : reimagining American nature*. Corvallis : Oregon State University Press. GF21 .O33 2003.

Soulé, Michael E. and Gary Lease. 1995. *Reinventing nature?: responses to postmodern deconstruction*. Washington, D.C. : Island Press. GE40 .R45 1995.

Turner, Jack. 1996. *The Abstract Wild*. Tucson: Univ. of Arizona press. QH81 .T87 1996.