

Course Name: **Nature in Storytelling over the Centuries**

Course Number: **NR 380**

Term: Winter 2022

Credits: 3

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Course Description

Nature in Storytelling over the Centuries examines the significant role nature has played in storytelling across years and cultures. *Nature in Storytelling over the Centuries* examines the historic tendency within cultures to mythologize elements of the natural world, resulting in time-honored myths, fables, and stories. The course begins with an examination of nature-based folklore from past centuries, with emphasis on written works. This initial examination reveals early perceptions about natural landscapes – and the flora and fauna they contained – held by societies and cultures.

Focus then shifts to Western popular culture, and an exploration of how elements of the natural world have been portrayed in film, television, and advertising. This exploration will reveal contemporary perceptions and ideas regarding nature, and how those perceptions have evolved over the past several decades.

Furthermore, analysis of contemporary popular culture will reveal connections between perceptions about nature found in film, television and advertising, and perceptions about nature contained in old-world myths, fables, and stories. In this manner, the course concludes by linking present to past, bridging centuries.

Course Resources (Reading Materials)

- Grant, B. (2018). *Monster Cinema: Movies & Popular Culture*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Hallett, M., & Karasek, B. (2009). *Folk & fairy tales*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press.

Other weekly required & supplemental readings will be made available via the NR 380 Canvas site.

Note to Students: Please check with the OSU Bookstore for up-to-date information for the term you enroll (<http://osubeaverstore.com/Academics> or 1-800-595-0357). If you purchase course materials from other sources, be very careful to obtain the correct ISBN.

Course Credits

This course combines approximately 90 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 3 credits. This includes and assumes time you spend interacting with course materials.

Canvas

This course is delivered via Canvas, where you interact with classmates and your instructor. Within the course Canvas site, you will access course materials such as the syllabus, online reading materials & links, class discussions, presentations, projects, and quizzes. To preview how an online course works, visit the [Ecampus Course Demo](#). For technical assistance, please visit [Ecampus Technical Help](#).

Technical Assistance

If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Information Services (IS) Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-8787 or visit IS Service Desk online at <http://is.oregonstate.edu/service-desk> (the main IS website contains an online email form).

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (NR 380)

General Outcomes:

Having successfully completed this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify various old-world and contemporary story forms, and compare and contrast their respective structures.
2. Assess short passages of text from stories for implicit meanings and/or bias.
3. Explain the meaning of 'popular culture', identifying and defining its various forms.
4. Analyze the perceptions on nature and the environment contained in A) old-world stories and B) elements of contemporary popular culture such as film, television shows, advertisements, and song.
5. Apply aspects of nature theme and story form structure to creation of contemporary stories.
6. Distinguish between old-world and new-world perspectives regarding the natural world.
7. Explain some ways that stories and perspectives are a reflection of the culture and society from which they originate.
8. Communicate effectively through written and oral strategies.

Evaluation of Student Performance

In this course, your understanding will be assessed via independent (solo) writing assignments, participation in course discussions, midterm exam, final exam, and a group research project and presentation. You will be notified promptly of any changes to anticipated assignments.

Regarding Discussions: When participating in discussions, your contribution should reflect comprehension of content from assigned readings and presentations. As such, you need to keep up with reading assignments and other assigned tasks. *Be an active and prepared participant in class discussions!*

What you get out of this course will depend upon what you put into it. This course is rich in content, yet the actual learning is up to you. Furthermore, keep in mind the course schedule is subject to slight modification as the course proceeds. You will be notified of any such changes via course announcement.

Summary of Assignments

A) Writing Assignments

Students are assigned three Short writing assignments, which will encompass the following directives:

Paper 1: *Connecting Story to Society:*

In this initial writing assignment, students are asked to select a story explored in class – *or seek out a myth, fable, or folk tale on their own with instructor approval* – and assess the story within the context of the natural resource perceptions and cultural influences that helped shape its creation.

Paper 2: *Student as Storyteller:*

Having selected a traditional (old-world or new world) nature theme and old-world story form structure, students will craft a contemporary short story based on expectations and structure inherent to that particular story form.

Paper 3: *Nature and Pop Culture:*

Students will view a sampling of segments from movies, television shows, and advertisements, and assess them based on their ability to convey messages about nature and the environment.

B) Midterm Exam

Covers content from weeks 1-5 of the course

C) Final Exam

Covers content from weeks 6-10 of the course

D) Hollywood Beckons (Group Story Production Project)

Working in small groups, students will inventory and discuss various 'nature mythology' themes covered in class, along with prevailing perspectives on nature arising from the old-world stories and contemporary popular culture forms explored to that point. Groups will then select one of those prevailing themes and/or perspectives, select a story form/structure from among those explored in class, and use it as a template to construct a short story centering on their chosen theme. Each group will craft and deliver a presentation that *A) Reveals and conveys their chosen theme, B) Illustrates how that theme manifests itself in old-world story forms and contemporary popular culture, and C) shares the story created in the form of a brief video.*

E) Course Discussions (Participation)

Course discussions challenge students to reflect on and assess course content. Using guiding questions provided by the instructor, students will identify and explain prevailing concepts arising from content delivered that particular week, and debate the relative significance of those concepts.

Grades in NR 380 are based on completion of assignments itemized below.

Grade Percentage System (NR 380):

Writing Assignments	30%
Midterm Exam	10%
Final Exam	10%
Group Project (Capstone)	25%
Course Discussions	25%
Total	100%

Grading Scale (final course grade correlates with the following)

Letter Grade	Percent of Total Points	
A	>94%	C+ 77-79%
A-	90-94%	C 74-76%
B+	87-89%	C- 70-73%
B	84-86%	D+ 67-69%
B-	80-83%	D 64-66%
		D- 60-63%
		F <60%

Course Schedule (note: schedule is subject to change; weekly reading assignments shared via Canvas site weekly modules)

Week	Topics	Assignments / Action Items
Week 1 (January 3 -9)	Course Introduction Old-world storytelling traditions	Course Discussion
Week 2 (January 10 - 16)	Old-world perspectives on nature and the environment: <i>Medieval</i> Examples of Myth, Fable, Folk Tale	Writing Assignment 1
Week 3 (January 17 - 23)	Old-world perspectives on nature and the environment: <i>Judeo-Christian, Transcendentalism</i> Example of Legend, Parable	Course Discussion
Week 4 (January 24 - 30)	Shift from old-world to new-world perspectives: <i>Romanticism, Preservationism</i> Summary of prevailing old-world nature themes	Writing Assignment 2
Week 5 (January 31 – February 6)	Exploring contemporary popular culture Popular Culture Defined; Nature and popular culture forms	Course Discussion Group Project Introduced
Week 6 (February 7 - 13)	Contemporary Popular Culture: Film Nature and Environment as Depicted in Film: <i>The Beast Within</i> Prevailing themes within film	Midterm Exam

Week 7 (February 14 - 20)	Contemporary Popular Culture: Television, Part 1 Nature and Environment as Depicted on Television: Examples and prevailing themes	Course Discussion Writing Assignment 3
Week 8 (February 21 - 27)	Contemporary Popular Culture: Television, Part 2 Nature and Environment as Depicted in Advertising: Examples and prevailing themes	
Week 9 (February 28 – March 6)	Contemporary Popular Culture: Nature in Song Connecting Popular Culture and the ‘Old-World’; review of time-honored themes	Wrap Up Group Project
Week 10 (March 7 - 13)	Group Presentations Influence of Social Media & New Media Platforms Nature in Storytelling: <i>Concluding Thoughts & Looking to the Future...</i>	Course Discussion
Finals Week		Final Exam

Course Policies

Makeup Exams

If unable to take exams when scheduled, **you must contact your instructor ahead of time**. Makeup exams will only be allowed in extreme cases. Excused absences **will not** be given for airline reservations or routine illness (e.g. colds, flu).

Late Assignments

All assignments are to be completed and uploaded to the course Canvas site by their due date. Failure to do so will result in a 20% point reduction for that particular assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted more than 3 days beyond their due date.

Incompletes

Incomplete (I) grades will be granted only in emergency cases (e.g. death in family, major illness/injury, birth of your child), and if the student has turned in 65-70% of the points possible (i.e. everything but the final project). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please don't wait until the end of the term; let your instructor know right away.

Contacting the instructor

If you have questions related to course content or assignments, please contact your instructor using the email address and/or phone number provided on page one. Don't be discouraged if you don't receive an immediate reply. I will try my best to return your email or phone call within 24-36 hours.

Communication

Ground Rules for Productive Online Communication & Participation:

- **Online threaded discussions** are public messages, and all writings in this area will be viewable by the entire class or assigned group members. It is expected that each student will participate in a mature and respectful fashion. If you prefer that only the instructor sees your communication, send it to me by email, and be sure to identify yourself and the class.
- **Posting of personal contact information** is discouraged (e.g. telephone numbers, address, personal website address).
- **Pay close attention** to what your classmates write in their online comments. Ask clarifying questions, when appropriate. These questions are meant to probe and shed new light, not to minimize or devalue comments. Reread your comments before you post them.
- **Disagree with ideas, but do not make personal attacks.** Do not make sexist, racist, homophobic, or victim-blaming comments. These will not be tolerated.
- **Online Instructor Response Policy:** I will check email frequently, and respond to course-related questions within 24-36 hours.
- **Observation of "Netiquette":** All your online communications need to be composed with fairness, honesty and tact. Spelling and grammar are very important in an online course. What you put into an online course reflects on your level of professionalism. Here is a reference that discusses online etiquette:
 - netiquette: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.
- Please check the Announcements area and the course syllabus before asking general course "housekeeping" questions (*i.e. how do I submit assignment 3?*). If you still cannot find an answer after doing so, then please contact me.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The OSU College of Forestry aspires to create an environment in which all members of the community feel safe, respected and free at all times to participate in various undertakings of the college, including learning, teaching, administration and research. The College of Forestry embraces the distinctive qualities of all members of the community. We recognize that equity, inclusion and diversity are foundational values of OSU as an institution and pillars of excellence, enhancing all of the College's missions.

Accessibility of Course Materials

All materials used in this course are accessible. If you require accommodations please contact Disability Access Services (DAS). Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a [vendor statement](#) certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Expectations for Student Conduct

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the [Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards](#). Here is OSU Student Conduct web link: <http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/code>

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For information, visit [Avoiding Academic Dishonesty](#), or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty:

A) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another.

B) It includes:

(i) **CHEATING** - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.

(ii) **FABRICATION** - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.

(iii) **ASSISTING** - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).

(iv) **TAMPERING** - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.

(v) **PLAGIARISM** - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

C) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled first by academic units, following a process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and then referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

Conduct in this Online Classroom

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the [university's regulations regarding civility](#).

Tutoring

[NetTutor](#) is a provider of online tutoring and learner support services fully staffed by experienced, trained and monitored tutors. Students connect to live tutors from any computer that has Internet access. NetTutor provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in a real time environment. They also have an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 24 to 48 hours. Access NetTutor from within your Canvas class by clicking on the NetTutor button in your course menu.

OSU Student Evaluation of Teaching

Course evaluation results are extremely important and are used to help me improve this course and the learning experience of future students. Results from multiple choice questions are tabulated anonymously and go directly to instructors and department heads. Student comments on the open-ended questions are compiled and confidentially forwarded to each instructor, per OSU procedures. The online *Student Evaluation of Teaching* form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions via ONID by the Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation. You will log in to 'Student Online Services' to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.