

Syllabus

LMC 3308 HP Environmentalism and Ecocriticism , 3 hrs

Fall, 2026

Instructor Information

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General Course Information

Description

A Cultural History of Fire: This Honors class will be the third in a series examining Environmentalism and Ecocriticism from the perspective of one of the four classical elements. Last year a class studied the technical, environmental, cultural, economic, and political circumstances regarding the extraction and use of specific materials in the modern world—Earth. This semester a class is studying Water, asking similar questions. In addition to reading literature, philosophy, anthropology, history, we also examine film, music, and a range of other cultural productions. The end goal of each class is the production of a printed book with chapters written by teams of students addressing a specific elemental topic. The honors class this fall will study Fire. Among many topics, we will look at historical and mythological figures such as Vulcan and Prometheus, study the coal industry in nearby Appalachia or the burning of Atlanta during the Civil War or the relation of fire to the Georgia lumber industry. In addition, we will study in detail the relationship between a warming climate and wildfires in the 21st Century— what Stephen Pyne calls "The Pyrocene". Along with the book project, we will plan some work in the community, perhaps even a blacksmithing class.

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes:

- Science and Technology Knowledge Construction: Students will understand that scientific and technological innovation occurs in a social context, and they will be able to recognize how the social influences scientific and technical discourses.
 - Textual/Visual Analysis: Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret not only cultural projects such as film, literature, art, and new media, but also scientific and technical documents.
 - Interpretive Frameworks: Students will become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations.

- Historical Analysis: Students will study literary and cultural texts within an historical framework to become familiar with the various forces that shape artistic and commercial production. They will learn to interpret history actively, rather than passively accepting archival information.
- Ethics: You will learn to recognize, assess, consider, and articulate the ways that ethical principles are deeply informed by humanistic and philosophical inquiry, which in turn shapes our lived histories, politics, and cultural expressions.

Required Course Materials

Stephen Pyne "The Pyrocene"
 Gaston Bachelard "Psychoanalysis of Fire"
 John Vaillant "Fire Weather"

PDFs in Canvas by Robert Hayden, Cat Anderson, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Dante, Norman Maclean, Lawrence Early, Helene Cixous, John Keats, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, DH Lawrence, Kathryn Yusoff, Jim Scott, Marc Wortman, and Jack London

Grading Policy:

Course Requirements:

Discussion postings	1 grade
Hour Test # 1	1 grade
Hour Test # 2	1 grade
Final project	<u>2 grades</u>
total	5 grades

Description of Graded Components

Discussion Postings: For every class that there is a reading assignment, you will write a paragraph response to the day's assignment. This paragraph is not a summary, but instead is a response to the issues and questions raised by the author and by your peers' postings. These paragraphs must be posted on the discussion tab by 10:00am on the day of the assignment.

Final Project: The end goal of this class is the production of a printed book with chapters written by teams of students addressing a specific elemental topic. The honors class this fall will study Fire. Course Policies

Attendance and/or Participation

Class attendance is mandatory. First two absences are excused, further unexcused absences reduces final grade by 5 points each.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Core IMPACTS

[Core IMPACTS](#) is the University System of Georgia's General Education curriculum. If you are teaching a course that counts towards Core IMPACTS, you should include a syllabus statement about the Core area and associated [career competencies](#). [This resource](#) developed by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and Online Education at Georgia State University includes template syllabus statements for each of the Core IMPACTS areas that you may adapt for your course.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Campus Resources for Students

Undergraduate Student Academic Success Resources:

- Academic Support: Academic Success and Advising (a unit in the Office of Undergraduate Education & Student Success) provides free support for your courses. Students can attend scheduled supplemental review (PLUS) sessions, stop by Drop-In Tutoring, or schedule a one-on-one appointment through Knack. To explore what options work best for you, please visit us online at

success.gatech.edu/tutoring, email us at tutoring@gatech.edu, or come see us at Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons, Suite 283.

Student Well-Being:

At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. A [comprehensive list](#) of wellness related resources has been compiled and maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being ([student-resource-guide \(gatech.edu\)](#))