

Reflective Writing – Ecology and Human Experiences

Due Thursday 5/16

The goal of these papers is to reflect upon the ideas presented in the course, to think critically about the course material and to make connections between them and your life. The paper should be between 2-4 double spaced pages.

You may use the writing prompts in a variety of ways. You may choose to answer or focus on only one of the prompts. This may also mean that you choose to focus on one part of the prompt. It is not necessary to address every question posed; these are meant to spark thought and give direction. You may also choose to answer several of the prompts either separately or together. Lastly, you are welcome to ignore the prompts and go your own direction with this assignment.

Learning Goal:

The purpose of this paper is to explore the learning goal for University Studies about the diversity of human experiences. We have engaged this in a number of ways including our discussion of the human relationship to the natural environment, indigenous and other perspectives, environmental and climate justice, etc. These are some of the many ways in which this intersects with our course. I would like you to focus your reflections on one aspect of this exploration. Some example prompts are offered below to give you a sense of where you might go with this assignment. As always feel free to choose your own direction within the confines of the general scope of this assignment.

Writing Prompts:

Think about your recent reading of the novella by Ursula Le Guin and your revisiting of Armstrong's piece. You might also think back to some of our earlier readings by Moore and Berry. What are your reflections on the perspectives presented in these readings regarding the human relationship to the natural environment? Have they shifted over the course? If so how? Think about the relationship in the dominant culture that is also explored in these readings. How or to what extent do you see this relationship present in your perspective?

How do perceptions about our relationship to the natural environment intersect with different social positions (such as race, class, gender, etc.)? Think about this in relationship to the forest defense conflicts of the 1980s and 1990s and the evolution of the environmental movement. How does social position influence the way in which we view the natural world? In which we perceive what environmentalism is and should be? What about your own social position? Do you see ways in which this may have oriented your perspective in particular ways?