COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this course we will read and write about many current environmental topics as we cultivate our awareness of writing as engaged environmental action. We will investigate various issues of sustainability facing today’s world including climate change, energy use, industrialized food production and examine the ways these issues are discussed rhetorically. Through reading a variety of environmental genres, we will explore our own human connections to nature, our own “place in the family of things.” Course texts will include science-based writing from the World Watch Institute as well as influential environmental writing by Bill McKibben, Barbara Kingsolver, Michael Pollen, John Muir, Alan Weisman, and E. O. Wilson whose essays will be studied for their rhetorical effectiveness. We will study scholarly research pertaining to sustainability and incorporate research into a persuasive essay in which we find ways to effect a positive change. At times we will “go local” as we write to effect environmental change in Boulder County and the Front Range through studying and writing about local initiatives. Throughout the course, we will seek ways to de-politicize environmental writing in order to reach wider audiences and to carve out spaces of shared values and common ground.

Service-Learning Component
An integral part of this course involves service-learning. Service-learning bridges academic work with community work, providing a real-world understanding of environmental issues and allowing you to gather data otherwise unavailable. As part of the course requirements, you will work with Boulder County Parks and Open Space and also with Growing Gardens, two non-profit organizations promoting environmental sustainability. You will write about your service experiences in Critical Reflections using state-of-the-art pedagogies. This writing will improve your ability to analyze, engage in meaningful research, and utilize rhetoric thoughtfully and effectively inside and outside the classroom. You’ll also use this information in a final digital project such as a film or a website. Through this work, you will be contributing to the global search for sustainable solutions, and expanding your own intellectual, social, political, and personal engagement with environmental issues. Service-learning will value add to your degree by giving you an employment advantage due to the valuable experiences and real-world skills you will acquire.
REQUIRED TEXTS

- Writer’s Help, Nancy Sommers, an online handbook
- Handouts using theoretical perspectives from Rosenwasser and Stephen’s *Writing Analytically*; revision strategies developed from the Harvard Writing Project
- Articles and worksheets posted on Desire2Learn—on environmental issues as well as writing skills
- Rhetorical Websites: writing@CSU (http://writing.colostate.edu/index.cfm); Silva Rhetoricae (http://rhetoric/byu.edu/); Purdue OWL (https://owl.english/purdue.edu/)
DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Ecological Identity 10%
This early assignment will ask you to write about the factors in your life experience that have shaped your relationship with the natural world. You will examine your own history with the outdoors and choose one or two experiences to write about that have impacted you. This descriptive writing will take the form of a chapter in a future memoir, displaying clear causation along with strong descriptive writing skills in order to recreate your experiences for your reader.

Short Writings and D2L Posts 20%
Short Writings and Posts will function as relatively “low stakes” writing that will provide scaffolding for both formal assignments as well as the opportunity for you to rehearse a range of rhetorical and mechanical applications/strategies. These writings will be based on the weekly readings along with your experiences in service-learning. You’ll practice supporting claims, writing short analytic and argumentative paragraphs, and practice various genres.

Rhetorical Analysis 15%
A Rhetorical Analysis will develop your expositional skills within a scholarly context. Writing in a scholarly tone and format, this essay will provide an objective expositional account comparing the relative rhetorical strategies of two readings that exemplify key elements of persuasion. While no research will be necessary, you will be expected to demonstrate understanding of pertinent course texts and lecture material. This essay will be assessed in relation to general fluency and mechanical ability as well as adherence to academic formats and audience awareness. The writing and rhetoric terminology presented in the first six weeks of the course will be used in this essay.

Persuasive Research Essay 15%
The Persuasive Research Essay will expand upon the expositional skills acquired in the Rhetorical Analysis. This more ambitious essay will ask you to focus on developing voice and agency within scholarly discursive contexts. You will examine multiple viewpoints of an issue in formulating, then supporting an argument using research and synthesis of theoretical and lay texts from within and without the course. You will need to demonstrate advanced comprehension of content knowledge, communicative fluency and control, research skills, the ability to synthesize data from a range of media, and a sophisticated degree of argumentation. You will have an opportunity to write within your major using rhetorical conventions in your field. The topics for this essay will be supplied midway through the semester.

The persuasive research essay will require a Proposal explaining your plan: 1) A working hypothesis/thesis; 2) A statement of purpose explaining why you are undertaking this project and a discussion of the paper’s significance for a specified audience; 3) A statement describing your own experience with this subject and what you bring to the project; 4) Describe your research methods: A plan on how you are going to gather materials (specify any unique sources, such as interviews, studies you will conduct, etc.), analyze problems you might encounter. Texts discussed in this research essay will differ from your rhetorical analysis.
Digital Technology Project  15%
Working with a partner, you will take action through video, writing, advocacy, or creating an original project inspired by your experiences gained through service-learning. This could take the form of a video or a presentation, website, which you will direct to a particular audience. You will attempt to inspire others, nurture an existing project, or contribute in a tangible way to greater environmental sustainability.

GRADING SCALE
Ecological Identity  10%
Short Writings and D2L posts  20%
Rhetorical Analysis  15%
Persuasive Research Essay  15%
Class participation and Critiques of your colleagues’ work  10%
Writer’s Help Exercises and Quizzes  15%
Service-learning participation, digital project, and presentation  15%

Workshop Format
This course will be taught as a workshop in which student texts play a role in producing part of the course “text.” Student writing will be discussed through critical dialogue in small groups or whole class discussion. We will all work closely together to move each person’s ideas to greater originality, depth, logic, and clarity.

On the days we workshop, you will be expected to contribute constructive comments to your classmates’ drafts. Writers need and deserve an attentive and discerning audience, one that is ready to help improve their writing and thinking. In workshops, writers want and need more than praise. High quality participation in workshops involves identifying weaknesses in the writing and offering ways to remedy them. The writers, in turn, will receive peer feedback and decide how to incorporate the feedback into their revisions. All students are responsible for reading the assigned student essays in advance of workshops. With all workshops, your responsibility is to arrive with hard copies of the drafts, (sometimes downloaded from D2L), and be prepared to comment on the work of your colleagues and to share in their inquiry.

All final essays need to go through a drafting process with some peer or instructor review. I will not accept final essays that have not been reviewed on a regular basis over the course of the assignment.

Preparedness
Succeeding in this course will depend on your preparedness. Readings and writings need to be completed for each class session since they will serve as the basis for the class discussion and activities. Preparedness means always bringing the articles, books, handouts, and writings needed for that day. Sometimes we will concentrate on a particular essay and handout for multiple days. This means you will need to review the handouts and essays listed on the schedule.

Attendance
In writing courses, attendance is essential. Please arrive on time and to attend every class. **If you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining materials missed on that day from one of your classmates.** I would rather you not email me to ask me “what did I miss?” Find a partner to keep you informed and stick closely to following the assignments on CU-Learn. Since we only have 29 days of class, each class is important. **You are allowed THREE absences to use in any way you choose. I do not excuse absences except in the most extreme circumstances.** For each class session missed over THREE, your overall grade will drop one fraction such as from an A- to a B+. **If you have six or more absences, you will have missed out on substantial course material that your final course grade will be no higher than a “C.” Seven or more absences will result in an “F” – NO EXCEPTIONS.** If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will be counted as ½ an absence. Failure to be prepared for class may also be counted as an absence.

**Drafts**

In addition to handing in final drafts of all assignments, you are required to produce a first draft of each major paper. We will sometimes workshop these drafts in class. **You will be graded not simply on the final paper you turn in, but on the quality of the entire writing process.** Your grade on the final drafts will take into account your incorporation of comments and responses to your drafts. When you hand in your essays, staple all previously graded and commented-upon drafts with your final copy placed on top. Never throw away any drafts, notes, papers, or research materials you produce during the semester until you receive a final grade.

**Late Assignments and Drafts**

All assignments must be turned in at the class they are due or in some cases in my mailbox on the Friday they are due. **Please do not email your submissions unless you’ve been given permission to do so. Final drafts turned in one day late (24 hr. period) will drop a full letter grade; no work will be accepted more than one class day late.** Missed work CANNOT be made up. If you are going to be absent from a class when an assignment is due, you must submit the assignments (in hard copy) prior to class in order to receive credit for the assignment.

**Cell phones and computers**

Once class begins, you need to turn off your cellphones and put them out of sight. Texting is not allowed under any circumstances. **If your cell phone is in your lap or visible in your bag, I will assume you are waiting for, sending, or reading messages.** If you need to check the time, wear a watch. If you need to input your classmates’ emails or mark something on your calendar—do it after class. The bottom line is this: if you text or use your phone during class time, you will be marked absent. Laptops are not needed except on rare occasions. Transcribe your notes onto a computer outside of class. Students who have texted in class can expect that any letters of recommendation for employment, graduate school, or future prospects will mention the inappropriate use of cell phones.

**Classroom Conduct**

Our classroom environment will use a discussion format in which you put forth your perspective on issues discussed. For this to be productive, we must treat one another with the highest respect. This means avoiding making disparaging remarks and instead valuing all honest contributions. I reserve the
right, if necessary for behavioral reasons, to request a student to leave the room. Inappropriate, lewd, and/or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated.

Writing Center
Additional help with your writing is available at the Writing Center in Norlin’s Learning Commons. A tutor will help with everything from brainstorming ideas for a paper, to grammar tips, to helping you organize your ideas. Advance appointments are required. Check the Writing Center website for information on hours and services: http://www.colorado.edu/PWR/writingcenter.html

Here are a number of CU Policies that you need to know about:

Scholastic Honesty and Plagiarism
Turning in work that is not your own or any other form of scholastic dishonesty will result in a major course penalty. If any part of a paper up to two sentences is plagiarized, you will receive an F on the paper with no possibility for a rewrite. If any more than two sentences are plagiarized, you will fail the course and the incident will be reported to the Honors Council. All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/index.htm

Disabilities
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website (http://disabilityservices.colorado.edu/) and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Holidays
Please notify me at least one week in advance if you will be absent due to religious observances. These missed classes will not be counted as absences. I will make every effort to accommodate your absence including giving make-up exams or extra credit work for in-class assignments missed. [See policy details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html] Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, {{insert your procedures here}} See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Classroom Conduct
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability,
and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

**Discrimination and Harassment:**
The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/

**Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Criteria**

This 3000-level writing seminar satisfies upper-division core requirements in the College of Arts & Sciences because it extends student rhetorical knowledge and writing skills by engaging theoretical perspectives and addressing specialized disciplinary communities. This upper-division seminar is part of the state-wide “Guaranteed Transfer” pathway of courses. Thus, this course meets the goals of an Advanced Writing course (GT-CO3) through:

**Rhetorical Knowledge:** The course takes a rhetorical perspective on academic research, reading, and writing activities that target real-life audiences in relevant academic disciplines or in the civic sphere. We will draw from Green, a collection of environmental texts, primarily persuasive in nature, to develop rhetorical knowledge. Students will first synthesize data from these texts in order to effectively communicate and substantiate ideas. Specific rhetorical concepts will be reinforced through various handouts adapted from Rosenwasser and Stephen’s Writing Analytically. To help students write in their academic genres, we will also refer to the substantive materials on three nationally recognized web sites: The Purdue University OWL (on-line writing lab), the Colorado State Writing Center, and the Silva Rhetoricae website.

**Writing Process:** The course provides multiple opportunities for students to understand audience-centered writing by focusing on peer review of work in progress. Through this approach, students will discover the importance of revision as an academic discursive activity. The revision strategies of experienced writers will be studied through handouts developed from Nancy Sommers’ Harvard Writing Project, a pedagogy that emphasizes revision as shaping and refining one’s arguments and addressing one’s audience more fully. As students write, they will integrate various technologies (e.g., Internet search engines, electronic discipline-specific databases, PowerPoint) into their persuasive essay or grant proposal project, and to develop advanced information literacy skills pertinent to their research area. Students will learn advanced information literacy skills needed for their grant (such as use of government databases for demographic data).

**Critical Thinking:** Skills of critical thinking will be developed through the readings, writings, and discussions of environmental writing. Students will examine complex issues from multiple points of view as well as differentiate
thoughtful responses to environmental issues from casual reactions, and criticism from critique. As students write about their service-learning work, the critical thinking pedagogy of Bloom’s taxonomy will be used to deepen their level of thinking, a pedagogy developed by nationally-acclaimed service-learning researcher Patty Clayton.

**Writing Conventions:** The documents students write for this course will call upon the key genres of academic communication (rhetorical analysis, persuasion, visual and oral rhetoric) in the field of sustainability as well as studying peer reviewed research and grant proposals, an increasingly important genre in academia. In the process, students will learn about genre conventions appropriate to their disciplinary focus and/or to their academic or civic audience. Students will also learn about how to draw on specialized vocabularies in ways that still make their work accessible to secondary audiences and about the role of textual features and document design (e.g., bold-face heading sections) as persuasive tools.

**Effective application:** Directing discourse to real-world audiences will be central to the course. The readings in *Green* will model writing directed to specific audiences of environmental writing. The strategies of ethos, logos, and pathos will be uncovered in these readings and applied to students’ persuasive essays and service-learning projects. As such, students will gain familiarity with writing in a disciplinary or specialized rhetorical situation, even as they make their work accessible to secondary audiences in other related fields.

### Day-by-Day Course Readings and Due Dates

*(All assigned readings are accompanied by a written assignment detailed on D2L. Readings will be discussed on the day listed below and the assignment for the reading will be collected at the end of class. This schedule is tentative and may be changed.)*

**WEEK ONE**

*T Jan 15*
Introduction to course: rhetoric and sustainability

*Th Jan 17*
Introduction to course: what is effective writing?
Reading:
- Handout—Writings by A. Lincoln and J. Krakauer

**WEEK TWO**

*T Jan 22*
Readings:
- “For the Love of Life” (Green)
- “The Ultimate Roller Coaster” by Richard Heinberg [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJ-J91SwP8w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJ-J91SwP8w)

*Th Jan 24*
Readings:
- Ch 1 McKibben
- “Rob Hopkins: Transition to a World Without Oil” [http://www.ted.com/talks/rob_hopkins_transition_to_a_world_without_oil.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/rob_hopkins_transition_to_a_world_without_oil.html)
“The Peace of Wild Things” by Wendell Berry

WEEK THREE
T Jan 29
Ecological Identity Assignment DUE in class
Readings:
“The Fish” by Elizabeth Bishop (D2L)
“American Forests” (Green)
Quotations Handout (D2L)

Th Jan 31
Readings:
“Called Home” by Barbara Kingsolver (D2L)
“What’s Wrong with What We Eat: Mark Bittman” TED Talk (D2L)
http://blog.ted.com/2008/05/15/mark_bittman/

WEEK FOUR
T Feb 5
Readings:
Chs 2 and 3 McKibben
“As the World Burns” (Green)

Th Feb 7
Readings:
In-class quiz on film Food Inc.

WEEK FIVE
T Feb 12
Readings:
Ch 4 McKibben
Introduction Handout (D2L)

Th Feb 14
Workshop Introductions
Readings:
Model Introductions

WEEK SIX
T Feb 19
Workshop Body Paragraphs
Readings:
Model Essays Knowing Words
Th Feb 21
Workshop Full Essays
Readings:
   “The Local Foodshare: Where Does Our Food Come From?” and “Why Eat Local?” by Michael Brownlee (D2L)
   Chapter 1 State of the World 2012

WEEK SEVEN
T Feb 26
Rhetorical Analysis DUE in class
Discuss Persuasive Research Essay
Readings:
   The Rhetoric of Scholarly Articles Handout
   Research Question Handout

Th Feb 28
Readings:

WEEK EIGHT
T Mar 5
Readings:
   State of the World Ch. 2
   Fallacies Handout

Th Mar 7
Proposal for Persuasive Research Essay DUE in class
Readings:
   State of the World Ch. 3

WEEK NINE
T Mar 12
Workshop Introductions
Readings:
   State of the World Ch. 4

Th Mar 14
Workshop Body Paragraphs
Readings:
   State of the World Ch. 5
WEEK TEN
T Mar 19
Workshop Body Paragraphs
Readings:
   State of the World Ch. 6

Th Mar 21
Individual conferences with Instructor

WEEK ELEVEN
SPRING BREAK March 25-29

WEEK TWELVE
T Apr. 2
Workshop Body Paragraphs

Th Apr. 4
Workshop Complete Essays
**Persuasive Essays DUE on Friday in my mailbox**

WEEK THIRTEEN
T Apr. 9
Readings:
   “Manufacturing Scientific Controversy” (D2L)

Th Apr. 11
Technology Expert Dave Underwood lectures

Sat Apr 13 Service-Learning Outdoor Learning at Boulder County Open Space: 8:30-12:30 am

WEEK FOURTEEN
T Apr. 16
   Discuss Digital Technology Projects

Th Apr. 18
   Dig. Tech Project Work

WEEK FIFTEEN
Attend Spring Service-Learning Student Showcase Mon. 3-5 pm UMC

T Apr 23
Readings:
   Dig. Tech Project Work
Th Apr 25.
Readings:
   Dig. Tech Project Work
   FCQs

WEEK SIXTEEN
T Apr. 30
Dig. Tech Project Presentations

Th May 2
   “The World Without Us” (Green)
   Final Reflections