

**Course Syllabus:
Environmental Psychology
PSY 355
Spring, 2003**

James L. Eubanks, Instructor

Office: PSY 424

Hours: Monday - Thursday 12 - 12:50 p.m..

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Course Goal: To learn about the interaction between people and their environments: how our behavior affects our environment and how that environment, in turn, influences our behavior. An emphasis will be placed on developing behavioral solutions for environmental problems.

Student Learning Objectives: As a consequence of successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic facts, principles, and applications related to understanding the reciprocal influence of humans and their environments.
Assessment: Three midterms and a final exam.
2. Identify and review both scholarly and popular literature related to the origins of environmental problems and identify the behavioral components of these problems.
Assessment: 1) Access electronic resources related to environmental problems from a behavioral perspective and 2) develop a final paper describing the behavioral components and required behavioral changes for ameliorating the environmental problem.
3. Compare your attitudes and behavior with those necessary for sustaining the global ecosystem and identify strategies for changing your behavior where necessary to maintain the sustainability of our ecosystem.
Assessment: Maintain a journal at least twice weekly that relates your personal attitudes and behaviors corresponding to key concepts and principles of environmental psychology addressed in class.

Required Text:

Bell, P., Greene, T., Fisher, J., & Baum, A. (2001). Environmental psychology (5th Ed.). Mayfield Publishing Co

Course Requirements: In order to complete this course successfully, you must

1. Attend regularly and participate in all class activities. Regular class attendance is **expected**. Much of the course content will be discussed during the classes and will provide an integrative framework upon which the exams will be based.
2. Complete three of four, 50-point tests according to the schedule below. The exams will be comprised of ten short answer essay questions based on study guides, class activities and lectures. Test 4 will occur during final exam week and will be based on the entire quarter's work, i.e., it will be comprehensive. Fifty percent (50 %) of your grade will be based on your exam scores. If you take all four exams you may drop your lowest score

from the final grade calculation, or, if you are satisfied with your first three scores, you may elect to not take the final exam. No make-up exams will be given. Absence on the day of an exam will be counted as the exam that you are permitted to drop.

3. We will discuss a range of environmental problems and issues during the first week of class. You will then identify an environmental problem in which you are particularly interested. This problem, identified in consultation with the instructor, will constitute the focus for three separate assignments:
 - 1) You will use an 8 1/2 X 11 inch spiral notebook to chronicle on each class meeting your specific attitudes and behaviors related to the environmental problem you have identified. Your entries should be timely with respect to the specific topics that are covered in class for that particular class period. You should bring your notebook to class each meeting and use it exclusively for recording these specific entries, not for miscellaneous class notes. Your notebook will be collected at various, unannounced times throughout the quarter and will be worth 50 points, or about 17 % of your final grade. Your notebook will only be accepted at the time it is requested in class.
 - 2) Locate and present to the class two web sites that have particular relevance to the environmental problem you have selected. The sites may relate to political issues, environmental education, a corporation promoting responsible environmental actions, or other organizations relevant to your problem/issue. You will need to locate the web sites and summarize them in a one-page brief for the instructor. You will present each site to the class at various times throughout the quarter, but the instructor brief will be due at the time indicated on the syllabus below. Your presentation should be about 10 minutes in duration and must relate the information on the web site to environmental psychology, and assess the validity of the information and motivational tactics used to influence the reader to the organization's particular point of view. This assignment will be worth 50 points, or about 17 % of your final grade.
 - 3) Develop a class term paper describing the contributions of human behavior to the creation of the environmental problem or issue you have selected, and a plan for changing the behavior required to alleviate the problem. Your paper must include at least 10 references from mass media print sources scholarly research in referred journals (minimum of five), government and industry publications, video sources, and internet web sites (minimum of two - those identified and presented in class). The paper should be at least 5 double-spaced pages and written in APA format. It will be worth 50 points, or about 17 % of your final grade.

Course Schedule: Following is a tentative schedule for the course. In addition to the topics listed, there will be an occasional guest speaker (depending on availability), films/videos, role-playing and various other activities designed to provide you with "hands-on experience" in applying the principles and theories of environmental psychology.

Week	Topics	Chapter
April 1 & 3	Behavioral approaches to environmental; problems; research in environmental psychology.	1
8 & 10	Biological influences; aesthetics Select environmental problem for class projects - Due April 8th.	2
15 & 17	Environmental Cognition and Perception Web Site Summaries Due April 15th.	3
22 & 24 29	Changing behavior to save the environment Unit I Exam.	14
May 1	Effects of noise on behavior	5
6	Natural disasters and behavior	6
8 & 13 15	Work, leisure and learning environments. Unit II Exam.	13
20	Theories of Environment-Behavior Relationships	4
25	Technology-related disasters and behavior	7
27	Territoriality and crowding effects on behavior.	8
29	Cities and urban environmental problems	10
June 3	Human factors and environmental design. Final Term Paper Due.	12
5	Unit III Exam.	
11	Final Exam (10 - noon.)	

Academic Policy: You are expected to attend and participate in all classes - your contributions to class discussions are important. If you are absent from class, it is **your** responsibility to get what you missed from another classmate or from the instructor during his office hours (not during class time). Academic honesty policies are strictly adhered to in this class, as referenced in the current CWU Catalog.

Course Grades: A total of 300 points are possible for the course (150 for exams, 50 for your journal, 50 for your two web site presentations, and 50 for your final term paper). You will be allowed to drop one exam score. If you are absent on the day of a test that will constitute the test you drop from your final grade calculation. Final course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A = 300 - 280 points	C = 229 - 220
A- = 279 - 270	C- = 219 - 210
B+ = 269 - 260	D+ = 209 - 200
B = 259 - 250	D = 199 - 190
B- = 249 - 240	D- = 189 - 180
C+ = 239 - 230	F = 179 -

My Performance: Use the following to keep track of your scores and grade in the class.

Exam 1 score ____
Exam 2 score ____
Exam 3 score ____
Final Exam score ____
Journal score ____
Web Site Presentation scores ____
Final Paper ____

Final Grade = Total of best 3 exams + journal + web site presentations + final paper

Unit I Study Guide

1. What is environmental psychology? What elements make it different from other areas of psychology?
2. Take a position on the statement "Behavior is independent of the setting in which it occurs," and defend this position.
3. What are the differences between a theory, a law, a hypothesis, a heuristic, and a model?
4. What criteria do we use to evaluate a theory? Pick your favorite environment-behavior theory and show how it stands up to these criteria.
5. What categories of stimulation are important in adaptation level theory? What other theories emphasize that there can be too much or too little of a good thing?
6. Distinguish between the descriptive, physical-perceptual, and psychological approaches to landscape perception.
7. What is meant by the term "biophilia?" What are the philosophical and psychological implications of biophilia if it can be clearly demonstrated?
8. Draw two simple sketch maps of CWU. One should demonstrate a sequential approach to mapping, whereas the other should emphasize survey knowledge and demonstrate a spatial approach.
9. How do propositional and analogical models differ in explaining the way environmental images are actually stored in memory.
10. Assume you have been asked to design a you-are-here map for the fourth floor of the psychology building. Make a simple drawing of the map and provide an outline of the elements you have considered in designing your map to assist wayfinding. What instructions would you give the person who installs the map about its location and orientation to maximize its effectiveness?
11. What factors improve the functioning of the commons?
12. What are some advantages of legislation or changes in technology to promote energy conservation over traditional antecedent and consequent strategies for promoting behavior change?
13. Why do some believe that changes in building codes or technology are the most effective targets for energy savings interventions?
14. Distinguish between antecedent and consequent strategies for changing environmentally destructive behavior. Which strategies are more effective and why?
15. What steps would you take to increase recycling behavior on campus?

Unit II Study Guide

1. What research evidence do we have that noise affects health?
2. What effects has noise been shown to have on children?
3. What does noise do to task performance? How can we explain these effects?

4. Describe five examples under which adding control changes the effects of noise.
5. What effects does noise seem to have on helping behavior? What are the best explanations of these effects?
6. What are our physiological responses to changes in ambient temperature? How does temperature affect helping behavior?
7. Why do laboratory and archival studies not always agree on the effects of heat on aggression?
8. What are some of the historical views about climatological determinism? What are current views about the topic?
9. Explain how each of the following theoretical approaches would account for weather effects on behavior: 1) behavioral constraint; 2) overload; 3) stress.
10. Critique each of the following: 1) a full moon causes an increase in psychiatric disturbances; 2) exposure to ELF-EMF's causes cancer.
11. What are the behavioral effects of your increased reliance on computers in the workplace (both positive and negative)?
12. In what ways do modern North American attitudes toward nature from those of the 18th or 19th centuries?
13. What are the advantages and disadvantages of "open" or "landscaped" offices? What might you do to maximize the success of an open office landscape?
14. Distinguish between ecocentric and antropocentric attitudes toward nature.
15. Assume the director of the Clymer Museum asks you to assist in designing a new display area. How might you apply the principles of environmental psychology to the project?
16. In recent years the desirability of designating additional wilderness lands has been regularly debated by North American lawmakers. What should be environmental psychology's contribution to the debate?
17. What do you perceive to be the benefits of wilderness to society? What might be the liabilities of designating too much wilderness?

Unit III Study Guide

1. Summarize the consequences of understaffing and overstaffing.
2. How much of human territorial behavior is based on instinct? Provide evidence both for and against the instinctual view.
3. How do animals adapt to high altitudes?
4. Would adaptation level be more important in considering effects of temperature, wind, or altitude on people? Why?
5. What elements must be present before we consider something a disaster?

6. What are the differences in people's reactions to natural disasters, technological catastrophes, and toxic exposure?
7. What factors seem to account for how much a disaster will negatively impact people?
8. How do disasters differentially affect people of different ages? Why do these differences occur?
9. What effects does air pollution have on people? Do people adapt to air pollution?
10. How do personal space and territory differ between cultures? What sorts of problems in spatial behavior may occur when people from different cultural backgrounds interact?
11. To what degree does the city act directly (in a deterministic fashion) on its residents? What other, less direct explanations might explain some of the differences between urban and rural life?
12. What architectural and social features have led to the failure of many public housing projects? How would you seek to avoid these problems?
13. In what ways might a design team foster participation in design? Which of the several gaps in the process do your suggestions address?
14. What factors contribute to a sense of community?
15. What design innovations can be employed to remove the fear of violence in prisons?
16. What design features are important in noninstitutional facilities for the elderly?