Course Description:
Welcome to English 291, Advanced Writing! This course is designed to help us become more independent writers. The course treats writing as a process of research, revision, multiple drafts, and feedback through peer workshops and instructor evaluations. The course also incorporates close reading and critical thinking to help us engage with the ideas of others and discover new writing techniques. You must have completed ENG 101 successfully to be in this class. Building on the writing skill you developed in ENG 101, this course will teach you to use research strategies that are more broad and sophisticated, and to make both technique and stylistic choices that are more varied and creative. Emphasizing critical reading, you will improve your capacity to use reading to negotiate with the ideas of others, form critically-informed opinions on social issues, and enlarge your own repertoire of rhetorical strategies when you write.

This course will also help you improve your writing skills while exploring the Nature Writing/Conservation (and possibly story and film) genre(s). You will explore major works in this area of concentration, analyze and critique both story and film, as well as write in several different modes, using a variety of technique. This includes the writing of academic essays and a research paper. Your writing will be enriched by reading, research, class discussion, and peer evaluation, as you gain a basic understanding of the Nature Writing/Story and Film Genre.

As the semester continues, we will investigate the way other writers use language, especially in their attempts to persuade their audiences, by analyzing and assessing the rhetorical choices they make. In all of our writing projects, we'll think critically about our purposes for writing and our audience(s) as we invent and arrange our ideas, choose effective rhetorical appeals for our situation, and determine appropriate style, tone, and diction for our work.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Students will demonstrate the following learning outcomes of the NKU General Education Program:

- C.3. Students employ the principles of rhetorical communication
- C.4. Students comprehend college-level readings in various settings and disciplines
- E.1. Students comprehend the ethical perspectives and responsibilities of individuals
- C.2. Students create and write coherent, grammatical pieces for a variety of topics and audiences

By the end of the semester, you will: (a) explore new experiences in writing, (b) develop research skills in libraries, on the internet, and in the community; (c) evaluate research
materials and integrate them effectively into your writing; (d) expand and refine your ideas through revision and peer evaluation; (e) document your sources appropriately, and (f) carefully edit and proofread your final submission.

Assessment Statement: To demonstrate that you have acquired these skills, you will complete several major writing projects, to be assessed according to specific grading rubrics. The Writing Instruction Program’s grading rubric can be found at www.nku.edu/~nkuwip/Students/Grading.html

Required texts: Finch, *The Norton Book of Nature Writing*
Stories available to you online or in the library
A folder or half inch spiral notebook for writing assignments, journal, and ideas.

Course Policies:
Reading assignments should be completed prior to the class meeting. Please note that the syllabus, readings and other assignments are subject to change. It is mandatory that you always bring the appropriate text(s) and your portfolio binder to the class so that you can mark relevant passages and take more effective notes which in turn will help you develop ideas for your essay and research assignments.

Class Participation is not only encouraged it is required. It is not only a significant part of your grade, it can pass or fail you. If you are struggling in class, participation can save your grade. It is impossible to receive an A in this course, if you do not actively participate during class and show up on time to class.

This is your class as much as it is mine. It can be as creative, interesting, inspiring and even fun if you decide to make it so. Because I am open, because I try to be kind and fair myself, and because I have a somewhat sarcastic, I hope, good sense of humor, students might mistake my teaching style as laid back, even easy going. I can assure you, and this is why it is written here, that when I comes to my expectations in holding you accountable for the work required for this course, I am in no way laid back. I expect you to come to class prepared, awake, and ready and to have your assignments completed on time. That also means having read all of the material assigned with an understanding of it and any questions you might have about the material. This is what good, mature students do. You expect me as a teacher to be a professional, to be on time and teach you a certain skill set. And I expect you as college students to also be professional, to come to class on time, willing and ready to learn.

Please turn off all cell phones. Off please, not on vibrate as this is just as disruptive. Under no circumstances are you to send text messages in class. If you do you will be asked to leave the classroom as this is disruptive and disrespectful to your fellow classmates and your professor. Let’s share this time together without external distractions.
**Attendance.** I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. Because time is limited, missing one class will result in dropping one letter grade. If you miss more than the equivalent of two weeks of class meetings, you may not pass the course and should withdraw. Successful students come to class! You are responsible for the material covered and the assignments given on the day of your absence. Please do not ever email me asking what you missed. It is your responsibility to make up the missed assignments, so I suggest getting to know fellow classmates for notes and assignments missed and if you know you are going to miss class that you inform and ask the instructor ahead of time what will be due. I do not accept late papers or assignments. **In class writing assignments and quizzes will only be accepted on the day of class, which means you will get a zero for that assignment if you are absent.** Please note that the first couple of weeks are critical because they will contain the information and material by which we will look at most of the course. If you know you are the type of person who can’t attend classes on a regular basis, who can’t keep up with reading assignments and due dates—this is not the class for you.

**Late Papers:** I do not accept late papers. If a problem should occur, contact me via email immediately and as far in advance as is possible to see if arrangements can be made. **I do not accept any assignments, late or otherwise via email.**

**Paper Guidelines:** I expect all papers to be typed following proper MLA style, paragraphs properly indented, double spaced, using 12 point font and stapled. No loose papers please or folders or plastic covers.

**Quizzes and In Class Writing Assignments:** Reading assignments, quizzes and writing assignments will happen for probably every class meeting. This counts as an important part of your grade, including participation and attendance. **Again, quizzes and in class writing can not be made up. If you miss class for any particular day, you will receive a 0 for that quiz/assignment.**

**Plagiarism & Honor Code.** Plagiarism (the unacknowledged use of words or ideas not your own) is not acceptable in college work. The penalty is failure for the assignment or the course. The work you do in this course is subject to the Student Honor Code. “The Honor Code is a commitment to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct, a commitment that, individually and collectively, the students at Northern Kentucky University will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic requirements.”

**Students with Disabilities.** Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services) for this course must register with the Disability Services Office. Please contact the Disability Service Office immediately in the University Center, suite 230 or call 859-572-6373 for more information. Verification of your disability is required in the DSO for you to receive reasonable academic accommodation. Visit our website at [www.nku.edu/disability](http://www.nku.edu/disability/).
The NKU Writing Center (www.nku.edu/~laplearn/lapweb/Writing_Center.htm) will assist you with any part of your writing process: creating a topic, generating ideas, developing a research strategy, drafting, revising, etc. I strongly encourage you to visit the Writing Center at least once during the semester to receive additional feedback. If you are struggling, this will also help your grade. The Writing Center is located in the Learning Assistance Center, FH 209, (859) 572-5475.

Requirements/Grades
Participation/In Class Writing: 15%
Quizzes/Film Critique: 25%
Essay 1: Narrative/Concepts 10%
Essay 2: Defining Through Example/Comparison, Argument 10%
Essay 3: Comparison/Contrast Stance 10%
Persuasive/Counter Argument 10%
Essay 4: Topic Proposal 10%
Final Research Paper: 20%

Syllabus (subject to change):

Jan 13 Introduction to course, Review Essay Format, Review Stance Writer’s Reference
Bring Typed Personal Essays to Next Class. Review MLA/1st Assignment

Jan 20 MLK Holiday No Class

Jan 27 1st Paper Due (Use WR 32-44, 67-108 for help in analyzing and using
Leopold’s Work), Quiz on Aldo Leopold pp. 376-397, Discuss Evaluation of
Information, Workshop Essays, Discuss Research Project!

Feb 03 Wendell Berry pp. 718-737, Peacock 832-841 Read critically to analyze, compare
and contrast, evaluate, how it does or does not reflect Leopold’s ideas. Come to
class with notes and prepared to discuss. Workshop/In class writing. Research
Topic Due (Local/Relevant to Your Life)

Feb 10 Comparing Berry/Leopold Papers Due (32-37, 40-44, 67-68, 72-100 Hector St.
John De Crevecoeur pp. 51-64, Meriwether Lewis pp. 95-104, Workshop essays,
Begin viewing Inconvenient Truth

Feb 17 Comparing/Contrasting/Adding to Your Stance Paper Due
Edward Abbey 614-620, Continue Inconvenient Truth, Evaluating
Films Worth and Effectiveness/Ineffectiveness
Major Paper #1
Length: 1-2 pages MLA Format

For this assignment, I would like you to write a short paper that both narrates an experience as well as expresses your opinion (or series of experiences) about Leopold’s ideas/concepts. The purpose of this paper is to show that you are able to pick out the most important/relevant material to show that you both know and are able to explain Leopold’s most important ideology/concepts. For example you could write a paper that explores how conservation became important within your own life. Why has it become important? When or what was the first or most important experience in your own life that helped you understand the importance not just of conversation, specifically connecting them to Leopold’s ideas. How have they come to be important or weaved into your own life? You can express your opinion about why or why you do not feel it is important to today and our current situation, place in time. But as you narrate experiences and illustrate how you became passionate/dispassionate about nature/conservation and or the importance of his belief system, you must cite and expose for the reader what his major concepts are.

Keep in mind that your goal for this paper is to use your experience as a platform for arguing how Leopold’s particular-specific/most important points apply. In this paper you will need to clearly identify Leopold’s main point/points and directly cite from that work what these points are and why they are important or why you might disagree with these points. Whatever your point of experience is, part of your goal for this assignment is to both cite and give the reader Leopold’s main ideas/terminology and that you show an understanding of them.

This paper is important for several reasons. One is that you show you understand MLA format, proper citation, as well as your ability to cite the main ideas of Leopold’s philosophy/ideology. We will be spending a major part of this course discussing, analyzing, and arguing effectively using this ideology. Most all of the material we use will be compared to or against this work.
Major Paper # 2 Using Examples to Express Concepts

Length: 2-3 Pages MLA Format, 3rd person point of view, present tense. 72-100, 104, 364-365

For this paper, I want you to focus on expressing how Wendell Berry’s writing and philosophy are examples of Leopold’s ideas. How well does Berry exemplify these ideas? What connections, comparisons and examples can you draw? Specifically, what does Berry say and write that can be used as a comparison to and or a good example for Leopold’s most important ideas. This assignment in part will show how thoroughly and comprehensively you are able to read and analyze as well as practice your abilities in both constructing and citing, picking out and using the most relevant material from both sources as examples of Leopold’s most important ideas.

In this paper, I also want you at some point to explain how and if Berry ever failed or fell from Leopold’s ethics/ideas. In other words, what mistakes, if any, did Berry make concerning Leopold’s ethics. You will also visit whether or not he understood and rectified this. In order to do this, you will need to explain and prove whether or not you feel Berry understood his mistakes, and exactly, through citing the most relevant material, the best evidence that indicates this (non)understanding.

As part of this assignment I will be looking at how effectively you are using transitions, linking your ideas, paraphrasing, as well as showing your understanding of Leopold’s most important ideas by stating and developing these main points and connecting/comparing that with the material of Berry.
Major Paper # 3  Compare and Contrast, Adding to the Argument  Length: 2-4
Pages MLA Format, 3rd person point of view, present tense. 72-100, 104, 364-365

For this assignment I want you to analyze and give the strongest examples of how Crevecoeur and Lewis were both stewards of (how they stood for, represent, follow or might be good examples) Leopold’s concepts/ideas/philosophy, and simultaneously how they acted in contrast to or showed differences to these same ethics. For each author, you must cite and show how they were both a steward of/understood Leopold’s concepts as well as acted in contrast to these main ideas of conservation.

I will be evaluating how effectively you have constructed your arguments for and against, making certain you are using the best evidence, the most relevant material and the specific language/exact wording to state this stance. As in our other papers, a major part of this assignment will be making certain that you have chosen the most relevant/important material and evidence from the works, both in what best represents Leopold’s Ideas on the subject and those actions that are most in contrast to Leopold’s specific Ideology.

After or as you have built your arguments for and against, I also want you to visit or offer an explanation of just why you think they might have done this. How intelligently are you exploring and developing your own ideas? Your understanding and critical thinking of these authors and their situations/material. Is it done in an unbiased manner? And your reasoning behind their ignorance, of whether or not you feel they committed/did not commit any ethical land/community violations as well as whether or not you feel within these early works you see evidence of our own ethics behavior today.
Works Cited Page of Five Relevant Outside Scholarly/Professional Articles

Major Paper # 4

For this assignment, you will continue drawing comparisons and expressing differences from Leopold, Abbey, and Peacock, but you will also add to or draw your own idea/conclusion to the argument of conservationism, global warming, and or the (non)destruction of the environment, whether or not it is fact, whether or not (and why) Leopold as well as these two other authors are relevant, important voices, and how effectively you connect your research/ideas to their ideas/actions. In other words, you are going to add to the conversation, using these authors as a springboard or examples to compare/contrast to your own ideas/research. In order to construct your argument, you will also make reference to and cite from an outside source that will eventually be relevant to your final research paper, as well as the individual works from the anthology.

Major Paper # 5  Research Plan


Feb 24 Opposing View to your Topic  Research Topic Assignment Due and Works Cited Page of 5 Nature Journals, Magazines, Newspaper, Web Articles) Copy of Favorite Article. (WR 412)
Mar 03 Last Class, Final Research Paper Incorporating All Stance/Material and Research