

# ECOPSYCHOLOGY CERTIFICATE

Lewis & Clark's Ecopsychology Certificate provides an opportunity for graduate students and practitioners to enhance their training with an evidence-based, experiential, and socially progressive curriculum, with access to the educational resources available at Lewis & Clark College, a top-rated US "Green School," and Portland, Oregon, a world center for ecological living and sustainability innovation.

Ecopsychology is a transdisciplinary field that explores psychological concepts and practices in the context of humans' relationships and interbeing with nature and the natural world. It draws on a number of paradigms including social science, health care, critical social theory, public health, and the humanities. In particular, ecopsychology highlights the personal and therapeutic aspects of people's environmental beliefs and experiences, including empowerment or despair about addressing environmental issues. This ambitious focus on the "personal and planetary" can be used to promote sustainability and conservation behaviors at multiple scales from the individual to societal. Students will find that the theories and robust empirical findings associated with ecopsychology have implications for a number of sustainability and conservation disciplines, and for the fields of education, counseling, and psychotherapy.

The course of study includes an orientation to environmental identity and behavior, an exploration of the theoretical and empirical foundations of ecopsychology, and skills courses focusing on wilderness and adventure therapy and eco-counseling and therapy. Special topics courses are offered focusing on areas such as the human-animal bond and environmental justice.

## Ecopsychology Certificate

The Ecopsychology Certificate is comprised of 8 credits of coursework. Courses are offered during spring, summer and fall semesters. Courses are typically held in weekend or summer week-long intensive formats.

There are three pathways to enrollment in the certificate:

1. Good standing in one of the programs at Lewis & Clark graduate school, for example: Professional Mental Health Counseling, Professional Mental Health Counseling—Specialization in Addictions, School Psychology, or Marriage, Couple, and Family Therapy.
2. Being an alumni of the graduate school or being a master's level graduate with comparable prerequisites from an accredited program (requires admission as a special student to the graduate school).
3. Good standing in a comparable MA-level counseling or other degree program at another institution (requires admission as a special student to the graduate school).

### Certification

By situating the Ecopsychology Certificate in the context of Lewis & Clark's accredited counseling psychology and education programs, students have the opportunity to add a certificate to their degree program.

### Certificate Requirements

A minimum of 8 semester hours, distributed as follows:

CPSY 554	Theoretical & Empirical Basis of Ecopsychology	1
CPSY 596	Wilderness and Adventure Therapy Immersion	2
CPSY 597	Ecotherapy and Applied Ecopsychology	1
CPSY 598	Topics in Applied Ecopsychology (three semesters, 1 credit each)	3

## Courses

### CPSY 501 Introduction to Ecopsychology

Content: Ecopsychology is the field of inquiry concerned with the human-nature relationship. As a species, we came of age embedded in the natural world, and that need for nature still resides in our bodies, minds, and spirit. A substantial body of scientific evidence demonstrates the physical and psychological benefits of interacting with nature. There is a growing interest in this area of psychology as we recognize the decreased presence of nature in our lives; the exponential growth of technology in daily living; and the awareness of global climate change and the role psychology has to play in addressing it. Ecopsychology recognizes that one of the central challenges of our time is to integrate our embeddedness within the natural world with our scientific culture and our technological selves. This course guides students toward self-reflection regarding their environmental identity and their "sense of place"; it explores the motivations for integrating ecological perspectives into academic and professional work; and it addresses the interrelationship between human and planetary health and wellbeing.

Prerequisites: None.

Credits: 1 semester hour.

### CPSY 554 Theoretical & Empirical Basis of Ecopsychology

Content: This course provides an introduction to ecopsychological theory and surveys research that supports the theoretical foundations of nature-based practices found in Ecotherapy and Wilderness Therapy. The course also surveys related concepts, findings and practices in psychology and the social sciences that provide a foundation for conservation and sustainability work, and for environmental education, advocacy, and activism.

Prerequisites: CPSY 501

Credits: 1 semester hour.

### CPSY 596 Wilderness and Adventure Therapy Immersion

Content: This course provides an opportunity to explore ecopsychology concepts and practices in the context of a multi-day outdoor experience. Topics include backcountry safety, outdoor leadership, wilderness philosophy and conservation, benefits of immersion in natural settings and retreats from modern technologies, multicultural rites of passage, and techniques for mental health and substance abuse treatment. The course typically features an off-campus weeklong or multi-weekend residential format with activities such as tent camping, day or overnight hiking, mindfulness and team building exercises, rock climbing and river rafting. Equipment provided. Outdoor experience not required. There is course fee.

Prerequisites: CPSY 501.

Credits: 2 semester hours.

**CPSY 597 Ecotherapy and Applied Ecopsychology**

Content: This course in Ecotherapy focuses on broadening and deepening the practice of psychotherapy by extending the psychotherapeutic context to include the natural world in which we live. We will survey research that supports the theoretical foundations of ecotherapy found in environmental and conservation psychology, ecopsychology, evolutionary psychology, and biophilia. Specific practices and methods that incorporate nature into the therapeutic process will be explored and students will have the opportunity to practice these techniques. We will explore topics such as environmental identity, restorative effects of direct contact with nature, a “sense of place,” the concepts of a Nature Language and Human Rewilding, and contemporary influences that affect the human-nature relationship. Ethical issues unique to the practice of ecotherapy will be discussed.

Prerequisites: CPSY 501.

Credits: 1 semester hour.

**CPSY 598 Topics in Applied Ecopsychology**

Content: This course provides an opportunity for students to do in-depth exploration of specialized topics or practices related to ecopsychology and to gain experience in various roles such as counselor, therapist, educator, activist, consultant, or researcher. Course focus and format varies given year and instructor. Topics have included children and nature, environmental advocacy, writing workshop, and horticultural therapy.

Prerequisites: None.

Credits: 1 semester hour.