I. COURSE INFORMATION

Department: Environmental Studies  
Course Title: The Environmental Vision: Reading & Writing about Nature and the Environment  
Course Number: ENST 335LW.01

Type of Request: ☑ New  ☐ One-time Only  ☑ Renew  ☐ Change  ☐ Remove

Rationale:
ENST 335 is a writing and reading intensive course that I have offered continuously since 2005. It has been full each year and receives highly positive student evaluations, many of which attest that students feel their writing skills improve in the course. Students read about 1500 pages of assigned literature, and they write about 25 pages of critical response essays.

II. ENDORSEMENT / APPROVALS

* Instructor: Phil Condon  
  Phone / Email: phil.condon@mso.umt.edu

* Program Chair: Phil Condon

* Dean: Jenny McNulty, Assoc. Dean

*Form must be completed by the instructor who is teaching the course. If the instructor of the course changes before the next review, the new instructor must be provided with a copy of the form prior to teaching the course.

III. OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE PURPOSE / DESCRIPTION

Provide an introduction to the subject matter and course content:

Through critical reading, class discussion/analysis, and written response, students become familiar with seminal, influential, and contemporary works and authors in American writing about nature, environment, natural history, and place; they develop a background, framework, understanding and context of key approaches, forms, themes, and concepts of American environmental literature; they become able to articulate this literature’s response to and influence upon important environmental events, figures, issues, and movements; and they demonstrate a sense of personal engagement with the ideas and emotions represented in these works.

IV. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Provide examples of how the course will support students in achieving each learning outcome

- Identify and pursue sophisticated questions for academic inquiry.

☑ Yes  If yes, how will student learning be supported?

The identification and pursuit of sophisticated questions for academic inquiry are supported in almost every class period through open engaged discussion among the students and with the instructor: about half of the time as a full class, and about half of the time in small groups, among which the instructor circulates. Learning is also supported through the extensive assigned writings, which require critical thinking about such questions, and through instructor feedback on these writings.
- Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively and ethically from diverse sources (description of information literacy outcomes appropriate for each class level). Subject liaison librarians are available to assist you embed information literacy into your course:
  - Yes  If yes, how will student learning be supported?

This outcome is supported through student research for several critical essays assigned in response to extensive course readings. Research in support of student essays is used to amplify and clarify essay themes and theses. Instructor feedback, before and after revision, addresses the quality of appropriate research, in terms of its effectiveness and ethics. It is also addressed and modeled by instructor in discussion about the readings: Instructor brings outside research to bear about authors and readings and encourages students to engage with it. Outside sources and references relevant to readings are evaluated, analyzed, and synthesized in discussion and exercises.

- Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate
  - Yes  If yes, how will student learning be supported?

This outcome is supported first in daily class discussion of readings, in which instructor encourages diverse responses, models critical questions, and offers multiple or contrasting perspectives on ideas represented in the readings. It is further supported through instructor feedback and revision suggestion to student writings, noting where other perspectives related to student theses and observations are needed, omitted, or included, and how such perspectives can be presented and framed most effectively.

- Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline
  - Yes  If yes, how will student learning be supported?

This outcome is modeled and reinforced by critical responses to, and critiques and analyses of, the assigned literature that the instructor references and describes in course of class discussions, as well as by instructor feedback on all assigned student writing. Instructor encourages each student to find and foster their own voice on the page, keeping in mind reader and discipline-specific expectations. Instructor assists students in reconciling these two equally important features of effective writing, and bringing student awareness of each to the composition process.

- Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work
  - Yes  If yes, how will student learning be supported?

Every assignment is returned for editing through keying errors to the Pocket Style Manual (PSM) and requiring students to identify and understand errors they look up in the PSM and correct accordingly. The mid-term critical response essay (minimum 4-5 pages or 1250 words) must be edited and significantly revised after comprehensive instructor feedback and revision suggestions.
A required text for the course is Diane Hacker's Pocket Style Manual (PSM), most recent edition, which includes detailed templates and instructions for multiple citation systems, as well as discussion of composition structure and practice and an understanding of plagiarism. Students are required to use MLA Parenthetical Citation form, where appropriate, in the two longer written assignments, and to correct errors in same, noted by instructor and keyed to appropriate section of PSM, in the Midterm Critical Response essay that they must both edit and significantly revise for the course, after instructor feedback. Conventions of citation and documentation are discussed in class as part of preparation for these assignments with consistent reference to the PSM.

V: WRITING COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Enrollment is capped at 25 students. ☑ Yes ☐ No
  If no, list maximum course enrollment.
  Explain how outcomes will be adequately met for this number of students.

Course has been most often capped at 20, although it frequently goes to 21-22. I find this is the most that can work effectively in the course, which is centered on and relies on daily class discussion, with class arranged in open circle to best facilitate and encourage such discussion. Outcomes are met by instructor’s diligent attention to them and have been so met each year since 2005.

VI: WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

- Briefly explain how students are provided with tools and strategies for effective writing and editing in the major.
  Instructor is author of 4 books and dozens of published essays and stories, holds a terminal degree in writing, and has been teaching composition, advanced composition, and writing at multiple levels and in multiple genres since 1987. Instructor explains writing and editing tools and strategies to students throughout course, with frequent discussion of the readings from that standpoint, as well as through feedback and revision suggestion on all written student assignments.

- Which written assignment(s) includes revision in response to instructor’s feedback?
  The midterm critical response essay, minimum 4-5 pages or 1250 words, must be significantly revised after receiving thorough written feedback from instructor, and both the essay and the revision each count 1/5 of course grade. In addition, the 5 shorter 1-2 page assigned essays must each be edited after feedback keyed to PSM, and fuller revision of any of these, after instructor comment, is allowed and encouraged for extra credit.
Please describe course assignments. Students should be required to individually compose at least 20 pages of writing for assessment. At least 50% of the course grade should be based on students’ performance on writing assignments. Quality of content and writing are integral parts of the grade on any writing assignment.

- **Formal Graded Assignments**

Five 1-2 page critical response essays, weekly through Oct., with each edited after comment; one 4-5pg critical response essay; one revision of 4-5pg critical response essay after instructor feedback; one 8-10 page critical response essay. Each counts 1/5 of course grade, totaling 4/5 course grade.

- **Informal Ungraded Assignments**

Frequent daily short in-class writing assignments designed to test student attention to readings and to help them articulate their ideas and responses to readings in subsequent class discussion. Occasional short written assignments from one class period to next designed to achieve similar goals.

- **Attach** a sample writing assignment. Include instructions / handouts provided to students.

**VII. WRITING ASSESSMENT**

HOW ARE THE LEARNING OUTCOMES ABOVE MEASURED? Describe the measurement(s) used, such as a rubric or specific test questions that directly measure the Advanced Writing learning goals. Please attach or provide a web link to the rubric, test questions, or other qualitative measurements used for several of the learning outcomes.

Student work is evaluated by instructor, with both the course and advanced writing learning outcomes in mind, using the instructor’s careful and informed judgement, based on two-plus decades as a published writer and as a writing instructor at every level from high-school through graduate students’ masters writing theses.

For the mid-term and major critical response essays (4-5 page and 8-10 page minimums, respectively), the following set of criteria is addressed, completed, and returned to each student as part of written feedback.

"Student Name: 

Essay Title:

= Engagement/Conviction (personal experience/connection, voice, honesty, emotion)
= Creativity/Imagination (originality, freshness, independence, thought provoking, profound)
= Structure/Organization (balance, movement, transitions, cohesiveness, opening and closing)
= Coherence/Clarity (focus, appropriate voice, strategic repetition, logic, understanding, expression)
= Language (rhythm, sound, phrasing, word choice, imagery, sentence structure--variety and length)
= Mechanics (Grammar, Punctuation, Usage, Citations—all PSM errors marked for correction)
= Readings Relevance (use of readings/writers, multiple perspectives, depth, breadth, selection)
= Careful/Critical Thinking (questioning, research selection/use, nuance, argument)

= OVERALL GRADE

Strengths & High Points: Instructor Response Narrative here

Revision Suggestions & Guide: Instructor Response Narrative here"
VIII. SYLLABUS

Attach syllabus and send digital copy with form to faculty.senate@msou.mtu.edu. The syllabus must include the list of Writing Course learning outcomes:

- Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry
- Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources
- Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate
- Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline
- Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work
- Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation appropriate to that discipline
- Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy

SUBMISSION

After all signatures have been obtained, submit original, and an electronic file to the Faculty Senate Office, UH 221. An electronic copy of the original signed form is acceptable.