

Environmental Psychology  
(PSY 362)  
Tuesdays (8:30–9:45)  
ASH 2310

**Instructor:** Prof. Eaaron Henderson-King  
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**Platform to subscribe or gain access to:**  
Kanoopy.com (you give your GVSU information to access the site)

**Contact information:**

Do the following, to receive messages and announcement from your professors on the same day they are sent:

- 1) Click on your personal information icon (the person on the left-hand side of your BB page).
- 2) Click on email notifications in the Global Notifications Settings section.
- 3) Make sure “Email me right away” is checked as well as any of the other options you want below.

**Readings:**

You must get a student subscription to the New York Times.  
<https://www.nytc.com/press/college-students-can-now-receive-digital-access-to-the-times-for-1-a-week/>

Norman, D. (2013). *The Design of Everyday Things*. (e-book) available through the library

Bechtel, R. B. & Churchman, A. (2002). *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. e-book available through library. You will need this book to read Gifford (2002) and Carpman and Grant (2002).

All other readings will be available on Blackboard under “Course Documents”.

**Overview:** Environmental psychology is the study of how humans affect, and are affected by, the environment they inhabit. It examines human behavior, well-being, perceptions and attitudes, and how each of these is influenced by the socio-physical

environment. Environmental psychologists look at how the natural environment, homes, offices, educational settings, neighborhoods and communities, and technology shape, and are shaped by, those in the environment.

Thus, in this course we will ask, and address, questions such as: How do we find our way around the environments in which we live and work? What factors lead us to like, or dislike, the places in which we live? What are the effects of overcrowding, pollution, and noise on our psychological well-being?

**Exams and Participation:** There will be three exams in the course. The first will be based on the lecture and reading material that will be presented in the first three weeks of the semester, and the second will cover weeks 4 through 8. The final exam will be cumulative and will cover the readings assigned in the latter half of the semester as well as the material covered in the first eight weeks of the semester.

The exams will be both multiple-choice and essay questions. The questions will be taken from BOTH the lecture material and the course readings. **THIS MEANS THAT YOU MUST TAKE SOLID AND COMPLETE NOTES CLASS.** The essay question(s) will be posted 5-7 days before the multiple-choice portion of the exam is due. The multiple-choice portion of the exam will be posted on a Sunday evening or Monday morning and you will have until Thursday of that week to start and complete the multiple-choice section. Once you begin the multiple-choice section you **MUST** complete it in the allotted time. There will be no exceptions to this policy. **You must complete both sections of the exam by the due date.**

While, under extraordinary circumstance, I may make an exception regarding taking an exam late there will be **4-points** taken off a person's score on the exam in such circumstances.

**Review Sheet (EXTRA CREDIT)** – For each exam, students can submit a thoughtful review sheet that covers the material for that exam. It should consist of key points, summaries, and concepts that you deem important. The review sheet can take any form that you would like (e.g., multiple-choice questions, crossword puzzle, note-cards, text, etc.). These reviews sheets will be worth up to 3 extra credit points. You should use these reviews to assist in your studying.

**New York Times (NYT) articles** – Over the course of the semester, you will read articles in the NYT that deal with environmental issues and any other articles that you deem pertinent to the course. Some of these articles may be relevant to your group project while others will be relevant to various aspects, and topics, of the class.

Every three weeks you will submit a 250-word (maximum length) paper discussing an article, or articles, that you read and what you learned from it. A good paper will be one that relates the article to course material and provides a thoughtful discussion of the article(s). A poor paper will be one that merely summarizes what was discussed in the article(s).

Beginning in **Week 3** of the course, we will have 15-minutes at the beginning of each class to discuss the article(s) that you have read. In each class, I will randomly choose four people to briefly discuss an article(s) that they have read. Each person will be given four minutes of class time. During the semester, each student must present twice. A student will receive a score of “0” if they do not present on the day they are called on, a score of “1” if they merely summarize the article, and a score of “2” if they can discuss the article within the context of the course material.

If a student misses a day, they will be given **one** make-up opportunity.

### **Attendance**

Attendance will be taken regularly and will be used in helping to determine your grade for class participation.

## Semester Long Group Project

Eight groups consisting of five to six students each.

### Topics

- a) Improving building navigation on campus (wayfinding and cognitive mapping)
- b) Litter
- c) Homelessness

For Topic A do the following:

For this project you will first need to determine if people perceive there to be a problem that needs addressing. Then you will explore why the problem exists, what is currently being done about it, what people's attitudes and beliefs are regarding the problem, and then, after understanding the problem, begin to develop a plan of action/proposal to address the problem. Much of this section will entail your talking to stakeholders (administrators, faculty, students, staff in the building and design departments of the university). These discussions can then be used to discuss the psychological factors that may account for the problem not being adequately addressed.

You must bring in the empirical and theoretical literature in examining the issue and developing an intervention plan. Thus, you will read a lot of the literature on wayfinding, and improving wayfinding, BEFORE talking with stakeholders. You would also use this research in helping to redesign the environment. Then you should ACTUALLY test out your proposal, assess its effectiveness and, if necessary, make changes to improve it.

Your paper and presentation will discuss the entirety of the project.

For Topics B and C do the following:

Develop a plan to reduce excessive litter (reduce homelessness) in urban environments. First, using the existing literature, assess the gravity of the problem. Also, look at the history of the issue in urban areas in general, and in the specific urban environment you are interested in. Also, examine the psychological and cultural factors that cause, contribute to, and maintain the problem.

Second, explore solutions to the issue, and discuss why each might, or might not, work. Discuss the psychological factors that would facilitate, or hinder, the effectiveness of each.

Your paper and presentation will discuss the entirety of the project.

### **Annotated Bibliography**

The annotated bibliography should consist of no less than 6 articles that you have completed a summary between 100 – 200-words in length. The following link will bring you to Purdue Owl, it has an example of an APA style annotated bibliography (the example that says “Sample APA Annotation”).

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/common\\_writing\\_assignments/annotated\\_bibliographies/annotated\\_bibliography\\_samples.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/annotated_bibliographies/annotated_bibliography_samples.html)

### **Paper and Presentation**

Each group will write an 8-to-10-page paper that incorporates all the above elements. The paper should include NO LESS than 15 references. The group will present their project to the class in the latter half of the semester.

The paper must be in either APA or MLA style, a Word Document, and include reference that are outside of the course readings. It should include a formal title page and an abstract.

You will also select **two readings** for the class to read. These readings must give the class a clear understanding of what the issue is AND the psychological factors that influence how the issue is approached. These readings will be used as the basis for the group leading a class presentation and discussion of their action project. Also, note that the final exam will include questions based on these readings. The readings must be submitted to me in a **PDF** format by **February 25<sup>th</sup>**. A set of discussion questions, which may be revised, should also be submitted.

In the second half of the semester each group present their project to the class. Each group will be given a class period to present the entirety of the project (50 minutes for the presentation of the paper and 25 minutes for discussion).

Every person in the group must be actively involved in the project and will be evaluated by the group at various points during the semester.

## Assignments and Grade Distribution

**Quizzes on readings (three) – 30 points (10 points each)**

**Exam 1 – 50 points**

**Exam 2 – 50 points**

**Final Exam – 80 points**

**One paragraph project proposal – 10 points**

**Paper – 80 pts**

**Class presentation – 30 pts**

**Annotated Bibliography – 20 pts**

**Group evaluation of individual member's contribution and performance – 25 pts**

**Submission of readings – 5 pts**

**Oral discussions of New York Times articles – 20 pts**

**Written discussion of New York Times articles – 40 pts (10 pts for each paper)**

**Class participation (attendance, group participation, engagement) – 25 pts**

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**Total points for the course -- 465 pts**

Grade Distribution:

A -- 100-94%	A- -- 93.9-90%
B+ -- 89.9-87%	B -- 86.9-83%
B- -- 82.9-80%	C+ -- 79.9-77%
C -- 76.9-73%	C- -- 72.9-70%
D+ -- 69.9-67%	D -- 66.9-63%
D- -- 62.9-60%	F -- 59.9%--

## Schedule of classes and readings

(Week 1)

1/9 – 1/11

Introduction: What is Environmental Psychology?

**Video: Advertising at the Edge of the Apocalypse (Sat July) access through Kanopy.com**

Readings:

Gifford, R. (2002). Making a difference: Some ways environmental psychology has improved the world. In R. B. Bechtel and A. Churchman, *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons. (e-book) (Chapter 21)

Christakis, N. A. & Fowler, J. H. (2007) The spread of obesity in a large social network over 32 years. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 357(4), 370-379.

Ulrich, R. S. (1984). View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science*, 224, 420-421.

Norman, D. (2013). *The Design of Everyday Things. Chapter 1, The psychopathology of everyday things.*

Climate Change in the news:

[https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/19/climate/climate-crash-course-1.html?name=styl%20climate&region=TOP\\_BANNER&block=storyline\\_menu\\_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&impression\\_id=50d7c4b3-39af-11eb-bf16-b1bc3114c5ab&variant=1\\_Show](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/19/climate/climate-crash-course-1.html?name=styl%20climate&region=TOP_BANNER&block=storyline_menu_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&impression_id=50d7c4b3-39af-11eb-bf16-b1bc3114c5ab&variant=1_Show)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/08/climate/arctic-climate-change.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage>

(Week 2)

1/16 – 1/18

Readings:

Tasilis, T. A. & Nikolaou, I. E. (2017). Assessing the effects of climate change regulations on the business community: A system dynamic approach. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 26, 826-843.

Government Policy Environmental Pollution:

[https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/03/climate/arctic-refuge-lease-sales.html?name=styl-climate&region=TOP\\_BANNER&block=storyline\\_menu\\_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&impression\\_id=832ca2e0-39b0-11eb-93ec-0ffbe5611593&variant=1](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/03/climate/arctic-refuge-lease-sales.html?name=styl-climate&region=TOP_BANNER&block=storyline_menu_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&impression_id=832ca2e0-39b0-11eb-93ec-0ffbe5611593&variant=1) Show

[https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks-list.html?name=styl-climate&region=TOP\\_BANNER&block=storyline\\_menu\\_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&impression\\_id=c234b921-39ae-11eb-b531-db89d9c8dbdb&variant=1](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks-list.html?name=styl-climate&region=TOP_BANNER&block=storyline_menu_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&impression_id=c234b921-39ae-11eb-b531-db89d9c8dbdb&variant=1) Show

Water:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/03/business/colorado-river-water-rights.html?searchResultPosition=5>

Films:

Last Call at the Oasis (Tubi)

[https://tubitv.com/movies/312545/last-call-at-the-oasis?start=true&utm\\_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed](https://tubitv.com/movies/312545/last-call-at-the-oasis?start=true&utm_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed)

**(Week 3)**

**1/23 – 1/25**

**1/25 -- Quiz 1 – Over the readings from Week 1 and Week 2**

**1/26 – Take-home Essay posted on Blackboard by NOON**

**1/26 – NYT written discussion due by 11:59 PM**

Research Methods in Environmental Psychology

**(Week 4)**

**1/30 – 2/1**

**2/2 – One paragraph project proposal due by 11:59 pm (submitted via email)**

**2/4– Take-home essay response submitted via Blackboard**

Ecology and a Multi-Level Perspective

Readings:



## Systems Theory Folder

Milgram, S. (1970). The experience of living in cities. *Science*, 167, 1461-1468.

Argyle, M. & Dean, J. (1965). Eye-contact, distance and affiliation. *Sociometry*, 28, 289-304.

Leather, P., Beale, D., & Sullivan, L. (2003). Noise, psychological stress and their interaction in the workplace. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23, 213-222.

Moser, G. (1988). Urban stress and helping behavior: Effects of environmental overload and noise on behavior. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 8, 287-298.

Film: *Intelligent Trees*:  
Free on Amazon Prime and Tubi

The American Political Context:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/16/opinion/trump-political-sectarianism.html>

**(Week 5)**  
**2/6 – 2/8**

## **2/6–Multiple-Choice Portion of Exam (Weeks 1-4)**

### Perception, Cognition and the Environment

Readings:

#### Perception and Cognition Folder

Carpman, J. R. & Grant, M. A. (2002). Wayfinding: A broad view. In R. B. Bechtel and A. Churchman, *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons. **(e-book) (Chapter 28)**

Dalton, R. C., Hölscher, C., & Montello, D. R. (2019) Wayfinding as a social activity. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4, 1-12.

Milgram, S. & Jodelete, D. (1977). The way Parisians see Paris. *New Society*, 3, 234-237.

**(Week 6)**  
**2/13 – 2/15**

**\*\*\*Annotated Bibliography and Selected Choice of Readings for Class Due 2/15 by 11:59 PM\*\*\***

**\*\*\*Readings (PDFs) from each group submitted via email by 11:59 PM \*\*\***

**Quiz 2 – Over the readings from Week 5 and Week 6**

**2/16 – NYT written discussion due by 11:59 PM**

Personality and Socio-cultural factors in Attitudes Toward the Environment

Readings:

Personality and Socio-cultural Folder

Kaiser, F. G. & Byrka, K. (2011). Environmentalism as a trait: Gauging people's prosocial personality in terms of environmental engagement. *International Journal of Psychology*, 46, 71-79.

Markowitz, E. M., Goldberg, L. R., Ashton, M. C., & Lee, K. (2012). Profiling the "Pro-Environmental Individual": A personality perspective. *Journal of Personality*, 80, 81-111.

Pelletier, L. G. Dion, S., Tuson, K., & Green-Demers, I. (1999). Why do people fail to adopt environmental protective behaviors? Toward a taxonomy of environmental amotivation. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29, 2481-2504.

Understanding Forests:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/12/02/magazine/tree-communication-mycorrhiza.html?searchResultPosition=1>

**(Week 7)**  
**2/20 – 2/22**

**2/19 -- Take-home Essay posted on Blackboard by NOON (Weeks 5-8)**

Determinants of Pro-Environmental Behaviors

Readings:

Attitudes Folder

Frantz, C. M. & Mayer, F. S. (2009). The emergency of climate change: Why are we failing to take action? *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 9, 205-222.

Tobler, C., Visschers, V. H. M., & Siegrist, M. (2012). Addressing climate change: Determinants of consumers' willingness to act and support policy measures. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 32, 197-207.

Whitmarsh, L. (2009). Behavioral responses to climate change: Asymmetry of intentions and impacts. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 29, 13-23.

Hodson, G. (2015). Political polarization on climate change. *Psychology Today*.  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/without-prejudice/201512/political-polarization-climate-change>

Suzanne Simard: *How trees talk to each another*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Un2yBgIAxYs>

(Week 8)  
2/27 – 2/29

**2/26 – Take-home essay response submitted via Blackboard by 11:59 PM**

**2/29 -- Multiple-Choice Exam 2**

Pro-Environmental Behaviors Continued.

(Week 9)

SPRING BREAK

(Week 10)  
3/12 – 3/14

**3/15 – NYT written discussion due by 11:59 PM**

Sustainability & Human behavior and environmental problems

Readings:

Sustainability & Human Behavior Folder

Hanss, D. & Böhm, G. (2012). Sustainability seen from the perspective of consumers. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 36, 678-687.

Hirsh, J. B. (2014). Environmental sustainability and national personality. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 38, 233-240.

Derrick Jensen (2009) Forget Shorter Showers, *Orion Magazine*.  
<https://orionmagazine.org/article/forget-shorter-showers/>

Films:

Forget Shorter Showers: <https://jore.cc/w/forget-shorter-showers/>

**(Week 11)**  
**3/19 – 3/21**

3/19 Groups 1  
3/21 Groups 2

**(Week 12)**  
**3/26 – 3/28**

3/26 Group 3  
3/28 Group 4

**3/29 – Group Project Posted and Paper Submitted**

**(Week 13)**  
**4/2 – 4/4**

**4/5 – NYT written discussion due by 11:59 PM**

4/2 Group 5  
4/4 **Class Cancelled**

**(Week 14)**  
**4/9 – 4/11**

4/9 Group 6  
4/11 Group 7

**4/8 Take-home essay for final exam posted**  
**Quiz 3 – Over the readings from Weeks 13 and 14**

**(Week 15)**  
**4/16 – 4/18**

4/16 Group 8

4/18 Media and the Environment

Readings:

Bloodhart, B., Maibach, E., Myers, T., & Zhao, X. (2015). Local climate experts: The influence of local TV weather information on climate change perceptions. *Plos One*, 10(11): e0141526. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0141526

Taddicken, M. (2013). Climate change from the user's perspective: The impact of mass media and internet use and individual and moderating variables on knowledge and attitudes. *Journal of Media Psychology*, 25, 39-52.

**4/19 – Take-home portion of final exam due by 11:59 pm.**

**(Week 16)**

**April 25 Multiple-Choice Final Exam  
8:00am-9:50**