

Environmental Psychology  
(PSY. 362)  
ASH 1310  
T/TH 10:00-11:15pm

**Instructor:** Prof. Eaaron Henderson-King

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Office hours: Tues. 1-2pm and Thurs. 1-2pm or by appt.

**Readings:**

Bloomberg, M. and Pope, C. (2016). *Climate of Hope: How Cities, Business and Citizens Can Save the Planet*.

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 in order 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:** 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.

**Pop quizzes on readings (three) – 30 points (10 points each)**

**Exam 1 – 50 points**

**Exam 2 – 50 points**

## Final Exam – 80 points

The exams will be a mix of multiple-choice, short answer, 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 IN CLASS.**

**Action Project:** One of the primary foci of those who are interested in environmental psychology and those who conduct research in the field is *change*. How can we change people's behavior or the environment in which they live for the better? **Climate Change is the focus of this semester's action project. Develop an intervention that would maximize the likelihood that people, an institution, or an organization will a) seriously consider the possibility of anthropogenic climate change and/or b) work on modifying their behavior to address the climate change dilemma.** Thus, the action project will provide you with an opportunity to attempt to make a positive change on some level (on people's behavior or perceptions, or on the environment in which people live and work). For example, a group could, using the Bloomberg and Pope (2016) readings as a starting point (Chapters 1, 2, 7-10), examine what a local community (University, town, or city) has done to mitigate the effects of climate change. Then determine what additional step(s) could be taken and provide strong evidence that such action(s) should, and could, be taken. The group would also consider the social and psychological impediments to people taking action on such an issue. A central part of the project would be assessing the feasibility and effectiveness of talking to relevant stakeholders and summarizing those discussions. In those discussions, they would have read the relevant literature and be able to both discuss the idea/issue with the stakeholders as well as write to about it in the paper. Thus, your task is to develop an intervention that is designed influence the person-environment relationship.

### **The project should consist of the following components:**

- 1) a theoretical and empirical rationale for the project
- 2) conducting the project (meeting with the relevant stakeholders, discussing the issue, attempting to initiate change etc.) Note: This could be something like bring people in the community together to discuss the relevant issue at a city hall meeting; getting people to advocate for the issue, talking with family, friends, students about what stops them from acting to mitigate climate change etc.
- 3) an assessment component in which you propose how you would assess the project's effectiveness
- 4) writing an 8 to 10-page paper that incorporates the relevant theoretical and empirical issues, the practical issues with initiating change, what you did, and an assessment and critique of the project's effectiveness (what happened in conducting the project, what were its effects, what did you learn, what would you do differently in the future and why, etc.).

Each group will be responsible for gathering readings (theoretical, empirical, and/or applied) that address the problem. They will then select **two readings** for the class to read. These readings must give the class a clear understanding of what the issue is AND the relevant empirical background that assisted the group to determine how they would approach addressing the issue. 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 29<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 will lead a discussion on the readings, and both present and discuss their action project in its entirety. The presentation will last 45-minute. Groups will be graded on the quality and appropriateness of the readings they give the class to read; their leading of the discussion of the readings; their understanding and grasp of the issue they have selected and their ability to link it to relevant course material (where appropriate); and the exhibited effort put forth in conducting the project.

Every person in the group must be actively involved in the project and be able to demonstrate the person's understanding throughout the course of the semester. A portion of your grade will be based on my assessment of how well you understand what your group project is and your involvement in it. This assessment will be based on discussions with each group over the course of the term. In addition, each person will be evaluated by the group at various points during the semester.

**Paper – 50 pts**

**Class presentation – 30 pts**

**Individual portion of project – 20 pts**

**Group evaluation of individual member's contribution and performance – 30 pts**

**Submission of readings – 15 pts**

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**Total points for the course -- 355 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)

1/8 – 1/10

Introduction: What is Environmental Psychology?

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.*

### (Week 2)

1/15 – 1/17

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.

Bloomberg, M. and Pope, C. (2016). Climate of Hope: How Cities, Business and Citizens Can Save the Planet. **(Chapters 1, 2 and 7-8)**

**(Week 3)**  
**1/22 – 1/24**

**Guest Lecture**

Research Methods in Environmental Psychology

Assignment to groups and discussion of action project

Readings:

Bloomberg, M. and Pope, C. (2016). Climate of Hope: How Cities, Business and Citizens Can Save the Planet. **(Chapters 9-10)**

**(Week 4)**  
**1/29 – 1/31**

Ecology and a Multi-Level Perspective

Discussion of Projects

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.

**(Week 5)**  
**2/5 – 2/7**

**2/2 – Take-home Essay posted on Blackboard by NOON**

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)**

Chan, E., Baumann, O., Bellgrove, M. A. & Mattingly, J. B. (2012) From objects to landmarks: the function of visual location in spatial navigation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 3, 1-11.

**2/9– Take-home essay response submitted via Blackboard by NOON**

**(Week 6)**  
**2/12 – 2/14**

**\*\* 2/12 (Tues.) Exam 1 (Covering Weeks 1 through 5)\*\***

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.

**(Week 7)**  
**2/19 – 2/21**

Determinants of Pro-Environmental Behaviors

**Guest lecture**

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.

Winn, M. I., Kirchgeorg, M., Griffiths, A., Linnenlucke, M. K., & Gunther, E. (2010). Impacts from climate change on organizations: A conceptual foundation. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 20, 157-173.

**(Week 8)**  
**2/26 – 2/28**

Behavioral, Social and Health Effects of Environmental Stressors

Discussion of Project

**\*\*3/1 – Group readings submitted in PDF format by noon. \*\***

Readings:

Behavioral, Social, and Health Folder

Jones, D. M., Chapman, A. J., & Auburn, T. C. (1981) Noise in the environment: A social perspective, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 1, 43-59.

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.

\*\*\*\*\*SPRING BREAK\*\*\*\*\*  
3/3 – 3/10

**(Week 9)**  
**3/12 – 3/14**

**3/10 – Take-home Essay posted on Blackboard by NOON**

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.

**3/17 – Take-home essay response submitted via Blackboard by NOON**



**(Week 10)**  
**3/19 – 3/21**

**\*\* 3/19 (Tues.) Exam 2\*\***

3/21 – Group 2

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

**(Week 11)**  
**3/26 – 3/28**

3/26 – Group 3

Media and the Environment

Readings:

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.

3/28 – Group 6

FILM

**(Week 12)**  
**4/2 – 4/4**

4/2 – Group 8

FILM

4/4 – Group 5

Film

**\*\*\*PAPER DUE (IN CLASS)**

**(Week 13)**  
**4/9 – 4/11**

4/9 – Group 4

4/11 – Group 7

**4/13 Take-home essay for final exam posted**

**(Week 14)**  
**4/16 – 4/18**

4/16 – Group 1

4/18 – TBA

**4/20 – Take-home portion of final exam due by NOON.**

**(Week 15)**

**April 24 Final exam (CUMULATIVE) 8:00-9:50am**