

## Course Description

### Course Unit

**Topics in North-American Studies I: Ecopoetics of Alterity in North America**

### UC Code

MOD.921683

### ECTS Credits

12 ECTS

### Work Hours

336H (12 ECTS)

### Level

MA

### Academic year and Semester

2024/2025, S1

### Faculty

Margarida Vale de Gato

### Class

TP 1

### Language of instruction

English

### Class Description

The question of nature runs through much of North American poetry and poetics, from the Transcendentalists' "nature writing" (Buell 1995) to more ecocentric current experiments, combining criticism and language creativity in the multidisciplinary practice of "ecopoetics" (Keller 2018). This seminar promotes an "investigative poetics" (Retallak 2007) towards broadening the relational forms of language in order to highlight tensions and overlaps between nature and culture, and a critical and transformative attitude towards interspecies relations, the course and care of the elements, the community of more-than-human beings (Abram 1998). Without wishing to solve complexities, but rather to point them out and engage with them ("staying with the trouble",

Haraway 2016), recent eco-poetic, feminist, decolonial, coastal and/or counter-current proposals of hegemonic narratives tend to change what we are, how we relate to others, who and what we consume - as well as how we think, write, read poems.

Considering the material-contextual situation of approaching North American studies from a Portuguese point of view, we will pay special attention to the Atlantic axis and, from there, to the conceptual flexibilization proposed by the "blue humanities" (Mentz 2020), including coastal and archipelagic studies.

Proposed poets: Emerson, Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Marianne Moore, Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich, Erin Mouré, Julianna Spahr, Evelyn Reilly, Abigail Chabitnoy.

We might redirect our route taking into account the critical freedom resulting from the interpretative skills developed by the members of the course.

### ***Grading and Assessment***

- i) (20%) Class participation and postings on the blog (min. 4) [ecopoeticforms.blogspot.com](http://ecopoeticforms.blogspot.com)
- ii) (20%) Oral assignment - Performative reading/Videopoem/Collage, etc. + analysis: 20 %
- iii) (20%) Midterm paper
- iv) (40%) Final paper (15% first version + 10 % class discussion + 15% final version)

### ***Bibliography***

Abram, D. *Spell Of The Sensuous. Perception And Language In A More-Than-Human World*. Vintage, 1997

Buell, L. *The Environmental Imagination*. Harvard UP, 1995.

Garrard, G. *Ecocriticism*, 2nd ed. Routledge, 2012.

Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke UP, 2016.

Keller, Lynn. *Recomposing Eco-poetics: North American Poetry of the Self-Conscious Anthropocene*. U of Virginia P, 2018.

Mentz, Steve. *Ocean*. Bloomsbury, 2020.

Plumwood, Val. "Gender, Ecofeminism, and the Environment." In *Controversies in Environmental Sociology*, ed Rob White. CUP, 2004, pp. 43-59.

Retallak, J. (2007) *What is Experimental Poetry & Why Do We Need It?*. Jacket, 32. Online <http://jacketmagazine.com/32/p-retallack.shtml> [acedido 28/08/20223]

### ***Prerequisites (if applicable)***

In accordance with admission in MA program.