



April Cordero

BL01005 – Ecology and Conservation

Christian Practice in the Higher Education Classroom is described as incorporating instructional spiritual practices into one's course for the purpose of cultivating Godly reflection and practice in academic life.

Christian Practice:

Worship - Care of the Earth - Stewardship

Ecology and Conservation is a GE course for non-science majors. My goal is to instill an appreciation for Earth as an incredibly intricate system of interacting processes that are complex yet elegant, and these processes reveal some of God's creative activity. Activities were designed to cultivate the virtue of awe & wonder for God's creative activity, and from that, the intrinsic desire to care for creation because God saw that "it was good". I want students to "see" the natural world through a new lens that leads them to appreciate and want to preserve it, and for them to be able to connect that to their various majors. For example, how might an understanding and care for the environment (God's creation) translate into using sustainable products for fashion design, or motivate development of a sustainable ("green") company (business major)?

Activities:

1. Day 1 of class, after a visit to the local canyon, I discuss Genesis 1, "God saw that it was good." A few times throughout the semester, I revisit this statement.

2. Students read chapter one from *EarthWise* by Cal Dewitt, an active Christian ecologist, and create a 250-350 word summary that could be submitted to their church for their weekly or monthly bulletin to explain how the 7 provisions of the creator sustain us and why this should engender awe, wonder, and respect for the Creator and creation.



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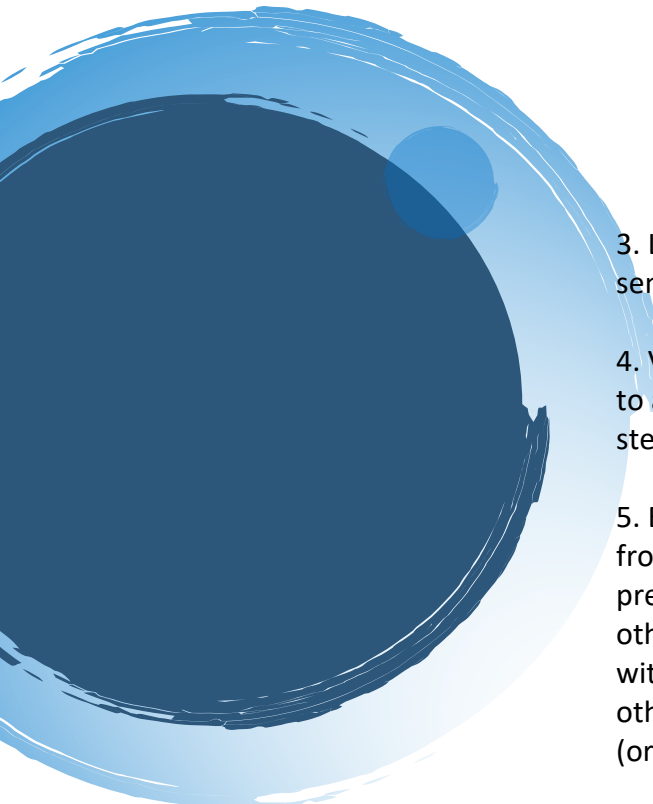
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3. Lingering in God's creation: a "reflection" activity mid-semester (modified from Dianne Anderson's project).

4. Volunteer for an ecological restoration project, then respond to a question about God's word and our responsibility for stewardship.

5. End of semester project: students work in teams with others from their major. The task: Create a 1-2 minute multimedia presentation (video announcement, audio commercial, podcast, other?) that responds to this claim made by one of your peers within your major: "Sustainable practices might be important for other careers like biology, but they are not relevant in my field (or career)."

