



## **CIEE Global Institute – Copenhagen**

<b>Course name:</b>	Environmental Psychology
<b>Course number:</b>	PSYC 2101 CPDK
<b>Programs offering course:</b>	Copenhagen Open Campus
<b>Open Campus Track:</b>	Global and Community Health
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>U.S. semester credits:</b>	3
<b>Contact hours:</b>	45
<b>Term:</b>	Spring 2019

### **Course Description**

Humans are emotionally impacted by their physical environment and the natural world. This course explores the interaction of environment and human psychology, examining how the environment influences cognition, behavior, and emotional well-being. It also investigates how our actions produce immediate and long-term consequences for the environment. Further, this course provides an overview of several pressing local and global environmental challenges and how these issues affect us individually. Finally, we examine human behavior and why it is psychologically important to promote global sustainability. A very relevant location to examine this is Denmark, the first European country to establish an official environment ministry.

### **Learning Objectives**

By completing this course, students will be able to:

- Explore how the natural environment impacts human well-being
- Investigate how local human-modified landscapes change our relationship with nature
- Understand why humans modify nature.
- Build up from local to global human behavior and how it is changing our planet and ourselves
- Examine human behavior and look for ways to exploit or change our default settings to build a more sustainable future.

### **Course Prerequisites**

None

### **Methods of Instruction**

The course will be highly interactive between the instructor and the students. Students are expected to do the required readings before class so they can present and discuss the class material among themselves and the instructor. PowerPoint presentations will be used by the instructor to introduce the material required and enhanced by the reading material given to students before class so they have time to read, digest and prepare



questions, and interact intelligently in class. Additional, non-required but recommended readings and online sources will be given to the students for further independent research and information pending their individual interests. These links are meant to provide additional material relevant to the texts to be read each week (see “Weekly Schedule” below). Site visits that are relevant to the weekly topics will illustrate the theories explored by the students through literature.

### **Assessment and Final Grade**

Students will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. Midterm Exam:	20%
2. Final Exam:	25%
3. Research Paper	20%
4. Presentation	15%
5. Class Participation:	20%
TOTAL:	100%

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Midterm Exam**

The midterm exam will consist of the material covered during the first three weeks of class, including the PowerPoint presentations by the instructor, the readings given for those weeks and the in-class discussions. The exam will be essay based, with students answering three essay questions.

#### **Final Exam**

Likewise, the final exam will cover all the course material for a similar examination. The exam will be essay based, with students answering three essay questions.

#### **Research Paper**

A 2000-word final paper is required. This paper must be an in-depth analysis of one of the topics discussed in class. All papers are research papers and must therefore have proper annotation.

#### **Presentation**

Students must conduct a 15-minute presentation in small groups on one of the themes discussed. They may use other audiovisual equipment such as a film.

### **Participation**

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions,



online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

**Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1 content classes, or up to 2 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements



10 – 20%	2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements; written warning
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 5 language classes	Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion

### **Weekly Schedule**

NOTE: this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.

**Week 1**

**Orientation Week**



Class 1:1	<p>Introduction: What is Environmental Psychology?</p> <p>Using a broad definition of the term environment; encompassing natural environments, social settings, built environments, learning environments, and informational environments, the students will be introduced in the science of environmental psychology. Why and how do humans interact with this so called environment? And how can we analyse and evaluate this? Basic theory and methodology will be discussed.</p>
<b>Week 2</b>	<p>Readings: Henry 2012, Stern 2000, Kellert 2016, Clitheroe 1998</p>
Class 2:1	<p>How is Human Behavior Influenced by the Environment?</p> <p>The second week will delve deeper into especially natural environments and what influence they have on human behavior. Also our economic and consumer behaviour are influenced by our natural environments.</p>
Class 2:2	<p>Landscapes</p> <p>What do landscapes, nature and urban green do to our well-being and awareness of our natural surroundings? We'll study this in general, with the help of the Danish local examples.</p> <p>Readings: Velarde 2007, Grunert 1995, Bratman 2012, Keniger 2013</p>
<b>Week 3</b>	
Class 3:1	

How does Human behavior Influence the Environment?

This week students will think the other way around: Which factors induce environmentally harmful behaviour and what motivates people to act pro-environmentally and accept pro-environmental policies?

Class 3:2

Biophilia and Biomimicry

And how does nature adapt to human influences? Site visit: Local grocery store – observations of consumer choice: organic, fair trade, price, convenience. Guest speaker: Cecil Konijnendijk, professor of Green Space management university of Copenhagen.

Readings:  
Fischer 2012, Kellert 2016, Keniger 2013, Milfont 2010, Schultz 2007

❖ Midterm Exam

**Week 4**

Class 4:1

The Danish Example

Denmark stands out worldwide in terms of awareness of sustainability and nature protection. It was the first European country to establish an official environment ministry in 1971. Early regulatory crackdowns on industrial waste and pollution have since expanded into tax incentives for low-carbon technologies (Denmark boasts some of the most cutting edge wind turbine manufacturers in the world today) and renewable energy generation.

Readings:  
Sovacool 2013, Alavosius 2011.  
Online:<http://denmark.dk/en/green-living>  
<http://csrgov.dk> the Danish Action Plan

Class 4:2

The Copenhagen Example

Copenhagen is working hard to become the world's first carbon neutral capital by 2025, and independent from fossil fuels by 2050. Site visit: Wind Energy Park



Readings:

[https://kk.sites.itera.dk/apps/kk\\_pub2/index.asp?mode=detalje&id=983&mode=detalje&id=983](https://kk.sites.itera.dk/apps/kk_pub2/index.asp?mode=detalje&id=983&mode=detalje&id=983)

see also: <https://urbandevdevelopmentcph.kk.dk/artikel/cph-2025-climate-plan>

- ❖ Presentation

## Week 5

### Class 5:1 Environmental Sustainability and Activism

During this week the students will explore the world of environmental activism. What are the dynamics in the activists field? What morals are applied: how far can one go on a mission for the common good? Guest speaker: local environmental activist.

### Class 5:2 Environmental Sustainability and Activism

What is the role of the government, both in Denmark and in other countries? Guest speaker: Geertje Schuitema, postdoc Aarhus university: encouraging pro-environmental behaviour through policy measures.

Readings: Wals 2009, Brynjarsdottir 2012, Dietz 2003, Hungerford 1990, Feinberg 2013

❖ Research Paper due

## Week 6

### Class 6:1 Future Challenges

The last week will involve discussion and debate. What challenges can we foresee for the future, in times of climate change, climate change sceptics, new technologies in sustainable energy, and shortages in fossil fuels? The students will give presentations on their thoughts and opinions.

Readings: Kelsey 2012, Poortinga 2011  
Site visit: CSRgov Danish Business Authority

### Class 6:2 Final Exam



## **Course Materials**

### **Readings**

Alavosius, Mark, and Mark A. Mattaini. "Editorial: Behavior analysis, sustainability, resilience and adaptation." *Behavior and Social Issues* 20 (2011): 1-5.

Bratman, Gregory N., J. Paul Hamilton, and Gretchen C. Daily. "The impacts of nature experience on human cognitive function and mental health." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1249.1 (2012): 118-136.

Brynjarsdottir, Hronn, et al. "Sustainably unpersuaded: how persuasion narrows our vision of sustainability." *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM, 2012.

Clitheroe H.C. et al., "Conceptualizing the Context of Environment and Behavior", *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 18.1 (1998) 103-112.

Dietz, Thomas et al., "The struggle to govern the commons." *Science* 302.5652 (2003) 1907-1912.

Grunert, Suzanne, "Values, environmental attitudes, and buying of organic foods", *Journal of Economic Psychology* 16.1 (1995) 39-62.

Henry, Adam Douglas, et al., "Understanding environmental cognition." *Organization & Environment* 25.3 (2012): 238-258.

Hungerford, Harold R. et al., "Changing learner behavior through environmental education." *The journal of environmental education* 21.3 (1990): 8-21.

Feinberg, Matthew et al., "The moral roots of environmental attitudes." *Psychological Science* 24.1 (2013): 56-62.

Fischer, Joern, et al. "Human behavior and sustainability." *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 10.3 (2012): 153-160.

Kellert, Stephen. "Biophilia and biomimicry: evolutionary adaptation of human versus nonhuman nature." *Intelligent Buildings International* 8.2 (2016): 51-56.

Kelsey, Elin et al., "Finding hope in a world of environmental catastrophe." *Learning for sustainability in times of accelerating change* (2012): 187-200.

Keniger, Lucy E., et al. "What are the benefits of interacting with nature?." *International journal of environmental research and public health* 10.3 (2013): 913-935.

Milfont, Taciano L. "Global warming, climate change and human psychology." *Psychological approaches to sustainability: Current trends in theory, research and practice* 19 (2010): 42.



Poortinga, Wouter, et al. "Uncertain climate: An investigation into public scepticism about anthropogenic climate change." *Global environmental change* 21.3 (2011): 1015-1024.

Schultz, P. Wesley, et al. "The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms." *Psychological science* 18.5 (2007): 429-434.

Sovacool, Benjamin, "Energy policymaking in Denmark: Implications for global energy security and sustainability," *Energy Policy* 61 (2013) 829-839.

Stern, Paul C. "Psychology and the science of human-environment interactions." *American psychologist* 55.5 (2000): 523.

Toma, Luiza et al., "Environmental risk perception, environmental concern and propensity to participate in organic farming programmes." *Journal of Environmental Management* 83.2 (2007): 145-157.

Velarde, M.D. et al., "Health effects of viewing landscapes – Landscape types in environmental psychology," *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* 6.4 (2007) 199-212.

Wals, Arjen, "Between knowing what is right and knowing that is it wrong to tell others what is right: on relativism, uncertainty and democracy in environmental and sustainability education," *Environmental Education Research* 16.1 (2010) 143-151.

## Online Resources

<http://denmark.dk/en/green-living>

<http://csrgov.dk>

## Recommended Readings:

Markowitz, Ezra M., et al. "Compassion fade and the challenge of environmental conservation." *Judgment and Decision Making* 8.4 (2013): 397.

Rees, William, "Whats blocking sustainability? Human nature, cognition, and denial." *Sustainability: Science, Practice, & Policy* 6.2 (2010).

Shanahan, Danielle F., et al. "The health benefits of urban nature: how much do we need?." *BioScience* 65.5 (2015): 476-485.

Shu, Lisa L., and Max H. Bazerman. "Cognitive barriers to environmental action: Problems and solutions." *Harvard Business School NOM Unit Working Paper* 11-046 (2010).



Toma, Luiza et al., "Environmental risk perception, environmental concern and propensity to participate in organic farming programmes." *Journal of Environmental Management* 83.2 (2007): 145-157.

Uzzell, David L. "The psycho-spatial dimension of global environmental problems." *Journal of environmental psychology* 20.4 (2000): 307-318.

Vlek, Charles et al., "Human Behavior and Environmental Sustainability: Problems, Driving Forces, and Research Topics." *Journal of social issues* 63.1 (2007): 1-19.