

## **Module Descriptions**

### **First Semester (winter term)**

#### **01 Approaches to Ecological-Cultural Change ("Approaches")**

*Organisation:* 1 Lecture, 1 Seminar (4 SWS)  
12 ECTS/LP  
exam: report/ documentation

##### *Contents*

"Approaches" introduces interdisciplinary perspectives and core areas for analysing the material and cultural dimensions of contemporary crises, such as the climate crisis and environmental degradation, as well as their socio-cultural and economic effects. The module comprises a lecture series and seminar covering a wide range of academic fields and perspectives such as: literary and cultural studies, ecological economics, media and ecology/sustainability, agrarian and landscape economics, education, and maritime ecology. A special focus is placed on core theories of environmental humanities and (literary) ecocriticism, and how these intersect with, for instance, postcolonial approaches, human-animal studies, or Indigenous studies.

In hearing from, and discussing with lecturers from various departments, students learn to recognise and differentiate between core academic fields, topics, and concepts in the ever-developing domains of ecological sustainability, eco-cultural change.

#### **01 Theoretical Readings on Culture, Ecology, Sustainability ("Theories")**

*Organisation:* 1 Seminar (2 SWS)  
6 ECTS/LP  
exam: oral exam (20 mins.)

##### *Contents*

"Theories" is designed to introduce students to the dynamic fields of the Environmental Humanities and of Ecocriticism, two related bodies of theory and critical thinking that

- acknowledge that we live in the "Anthropocene", an age of multiple anthropogenic environmental and humanitarian crises (e.g. the climate crisis),
- recognize the urgency to think beyond the conventional dichotomy of nature and culture, and to read and work across disciplinary boundaries, in order to understand and critically engage with these crises,
- negotiate fundamental questions and problems which the idea of an undissolvable entanglement of the human and the more-than-human world poses for cultural and literary studies, but also for the humanities in general.

Reading a wide variety of theoretical texts, students are invited to question apparently self-evident binaries such as "nature" and "culture"; be made acquainted with central concepts such as the Anthropocene, post-humanism, anthropocentrism, scaling/scalar literacy, environmental justice, and slow violence; and learn about fields of study such as Postcolonial Ecologies, Material Ecocriticism, Eco-poetics, Human-Animal-Studies, Blue Humanities, (New) Nature Writing, and Ecofeminism.

### 01 Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainability 1

*Organisation:* students chose a course from a range of available options (see below). Get in touch with respective lecturers! (2 SWS)  
6 ECTS/LP  
exam: report/ documentation, 2000-3000 words, 8 weeks, assessed by CEC staff

#### *Contents*

This module offers trans- and interdisciplinary perspectives on ecology and sustainability, especially from fields outside of literary and cultural studies. Generally, students are free to choose a seminar or lecture from the selected catalogue. Courses offered provide insights into planetary ecological connectivity (global north/ global south), sustainability and development policies, questions of legal justice, biodiversity, marine ecology, as well as agricultural land management. Students reflect on connections (or contradictions) between humanistic perspectives and the questions and methods of other academic disciplines.

The following German-language courses are open to receive CEC students:

#### Lectures:

- Vorlesung „Ökologie – Global Change und Angewandte Ökologie“ module 2700110 „Ökologie“ (MNF);
- Vorlesung „Recht, Ethik und Governance der Nachhaltigkeit“ module 3150100 „Transnationale Nachhaltigkeits-Governance“ (JUF)

#### Seminars:

- „Seminar zu Rechtspolitik und Rechtsgestaltung“ module 3150100
- „Area Studies: Asien“ module 3350010
- „Agrar- und Umweltpolitik“ module 1701210
- „Meeresnaturschutz“ module 2751270
- „Theoretische Grundlagen der Biologiedidaktik“ module 2780360
- „Biodiversität, Natur- und Artenschutz“ module 2700270/2700510
- „Medienbildung und Medienarbeit“ module 5150730
- „Siedlungs- und Landschaftsarchäologie“ module 5550470
- „Wirtschafts- und Sozialarchäologie“ module 5550490

For English-language courses please consult the CEC team.

## **Second Semester (summer term)**

### 02 Diachronic Dimensions of Ecological-Cultural Change

*Organisation:* 2 x 1 Seminar from the CEC offerings from the English Department (e.g. cultural studies, literary studies, or linguistics) (4 SWS)  
12 ECTS/LP  
exam: term paper, 6000-7000 words, 8 weeks

#### *Contents*

“Diachronic Dimensions” centres temporal aspects of ecological crises and social change in a global context. By mobilizing and transforming historical knowledge of anthropogenic intrusions into the environment, the module fosters an understanding of contemporary phenomena of the Anthropocene and their possible developments. Students describe, analyse, and critically assess the various interdependencies between ecological aspects of past infrastructures, historical technologies and economies, everyday practices (from food to leisure cultures), human-animal relations, and ideologies of progress and development. In seminars offered by the English Department, students further train their capacity to analyse and critique the social, cultural, and intellectual dimensions of ecologically relevant practices, and the resulting transformations, from antiquity to imagined futures.

### 02 Science Communication

*Organisation:* 1 Seminar (2 SWS)  
6 ECTS/LP  
exam: practical exam, 8 weeks, P/F

#### *Contents*

This module provides knowledge and skills for translating scientific and academic content into more accessible forms of communication for a larger audience. Students train their ability to efficiently and effectively communicate scientific knowledge to a variety of addressees. Discussions address the actors and institutions involved in science communication, as well as how science, the media and the public sphere interact. Examples of and principles pertaining to science communication formats are introduced and analysed, and strategies towards developing abilities in communicating science for a lay audience are practiced. Focusing on discourses in the field of natural sciences, but also including culture, education, politics, and economy, the module explicitly addresses contexts, methods, and problems of science communication.

### 02 Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainability 2

*Organisation:* students chose a course from a range of available options (see below). Get in touch with respective lecturers! (2 SWS)  
6 ECTS/LP  
exam: report/ documentation, 2000-3000 words, 8 weeks, assessed by CEC staff

#### *Contents*

“Interdisciplinary Perspectives 2” is the second module offering interdisciplinary perspectives on ecology and sustainability. Students deepen their understanding of the intersections of cultural, literary-aesthetic, and generally humanistic discourses by engaging with fields outside their

Culture, Ecology, Change (M.A.)  
University of Rostock

immediate contexts. Students may choose from a course catalogue (see „Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainability 1”); the same module cannot be visited twice.

## 02 Experience and Reflection on Culture, Ecology, Change (Internship)

*Organisation:* meeting/consultation (1 SWS)

Internship: 135 hrs. (3-4 weeks) - students autonomously find a placement

6 ECTS/LP

exam: report/ documentation, 2000-3000 words, 8 weeks

### *Contents*

In this module, students gather practical experience. Students are encouraged to autonomously find a placement for themselves and plan their internship in consultation with the course coordinator. A list with possible placements is available. Placements may be with the University of Rostock, other academic institutions, non-governmental initiatives and organisations, communal administrations, businesses involved in future technologies, art and architecture projects, etc.. Internships can also be completed abroad. Students are required to attend an orientation meeting before the start of their internship, as well as present and exchange their experiences in a one-day-workshop afterwards.

### **Third Semester (winter term)**

#### 03 Entanglements of Ecologies and Cultures

*Organisation:* 2 x 1 Seminar from the CEC offerings from the English Department (e.g. cultural studies, literary studies, or linguistics) (4 SWS)  
12 ECTS/LP  
exam: term paper, 6000-7000 words, 8 weeks

#### *Contents*

In “Entanglements” students explore and investigate the interdependencies and synchronicities of different forms and theories regarding eco-cultural sustainability from primarily cultural- and literary studies, as well as linguistic perspectives. They engage with scientific perspectives and theoretical approaches to socio-ecological phenomena and their transformation in a global context, and test different perspectives and knowledges of (anglophone) ecocriticism and environmental humanities approaches. Special focus is placed on the entanglements of anthropocentric cultures with the more-than-human world. Further topics might include: the Anthropocene, environmental ethics, human-animal-studies, ecofeminism, and eco-linguistics.

#### 03 Transformation: Designing Futures

*Organisation:* 1 Seminar (2 SWS)  
12 ECTS/ LP  
exam: oral exam (20 mins.), pre-requirements: B/D of group project in portfolio (10-15 pages, 8 weeks) + presentation (20 mins.)

#### *Contents*

“Transformations” combines seminar work with an independent group project.

In the seminar, students acquire knowledge about different theories of transformation (crises, transition, rebuilding, agency, resilience, future planning, etc.). They investigate philosophies of change, methods of social and ecological restoration and resilience, theories of cooperation and reciprocity, as well as literary-cultural utopian and dystopian fictions.

Based on this theoretical knowledge, students conduct a “creative lab” group work. Here, they imagine practices working fostering middle- and long term socio-ecological sustainability, and sketch a path toward their realisation. Ideas may relate to travel and mobility, city and landscape planning, education, entertainment, food/nutrition, fashion, communication, and/ or global connectivity. Projects may be presented through various forms of media, including text, video, exhibitions, installations, live projects, etc..

Culture, Ecology, Change (M.A.)  
University of Rostock

### 03 Research: Culture, Ecology, Change

*Organisation:* 1 Seminar (1 SWS)  
6 ECTS/ LP  
exam: report/documentation, 2000-3000 words, 8 weeks.

#### *Contents*

“Research” offers insights into current academic research in the field of anglophone sustainability studies and environmental humanities. Students engage with cutting-edge research, including (first) encounters with academic research and project management. They formulate their own research inquiry (which might test the grounds for a potential MA thesis topic) and critically reflect on their own and other students’ work to this end.

## **Fourth Semester**

### 04 Master Thesis

*Organisation:* students chose their supervisor and consult with them  
30 ECTS/ LP  
exam: M.A. thesis (60-80 pages, 20 weeks) + M.A. colloquium (20 mins report + 30 mins. discussion)

#### *Contents*

In the final step of their studies, students write their M.A. thesis in English. Students are able to choose and develop their own topic from academic contexts within or relating to anglophone cultural studies, literary studies, or linguistics. The main interest of the thesis must relate to the environmental humanities, ecological and/ or humanistic sustainability studies, and/or transformation studies, in line with the MA study programme. Regular exchanges and consultations with their chosen supervisor are mandatory.

Culture, Ecology, Change (M.A.)  
 University of Rostock

		LP/ credit points									
		3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
1 <sup>st</sup> semester	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainability 1</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Theoretical Readings on Culture, Ecology, Sustainability ("Theories")</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Theoretical Approaches to Ecological-Cultural Change ("Approaches")</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Free Choice</div>										
2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Diachronic Dimensions of Ecological-Cultural Change</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainability 2</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Experiences and Reflection on Culture-Ecology-Change (Internship)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Science Communication</div>										
3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Research: Culture-Ecology-Change</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Transformation: Designing Futures</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Entanglements of Ecologies and Cultures</div>										
4 <sup>th</sup> semester	M.A. Thesis "Culture, Ecology, Change"										