I. **TITLE:** Special Problems in Environmental Education

II. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** Selected projects in current developments and trends in environmental education. Repeatable to six hours.

III. **PURPOSE:** To provide an individual or group structure for investigating a specific project presented by the interdisciplinary nature of environmental education. The results of this study would be closely aligned to an active solution to a problem or an action plan for presenting this project to students.

IV. **COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The behaviors indicated below are reflective of but not limited to those advocated by the Kentucky Education Reform Act guidelines. Curriculum connections will be made with KERA Initiatives: Kentucky Learner Goals and Academic Expectations, Program of Studies, and Core Content. Following each objective and enclosed in parentheses are numbers which reference the Kentucky’s Experienced Teacher Standards (ETS) and the North American Association for Environmental Education’s Standards (NAAEE) in “Guidelines for the Initial Preparation of Environmental Educators.”

1. Help students acquire a working knowledge of a specific environmental literature. (ETS 2 /NAAEE 1, 2, 3)
2. Provide background information and historical data which will give students an understanding of the background of the environmental education project chosen. (ETS 1, 2 /NAAEE 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
3. Provide an integrated curriculum model of the ecological principles solution. (ETS 2, 3 /NAAEE 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
4. Prepare students to investigate similar problems existing in this region and state. (ETS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 /NAAEE 1, 2, 3, 4)
5. Encourage the development of values which lead to commitment to participate in environmental maintenance and improvement. (ETS 2, 3 /NAAEE 1, 2, 3)
6. Assist students in developing a model for a sustainable lifestyle and an ecologically positive model for the workplace as a result of this in-depth study. (ETS 2, 3 /NAAEE 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
7. Provide experiences which demonstrate current environmental problems and issues and examine the various cultural, economic and societal positions on those issues. (ETS 2, 3 /NAAEE 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

The COE Theme of Educator as Reflective Decision-Maker is addressed in this course by having students collect data or journal with regard to ecosystems, change over time, or

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2 North American Association for Environmental Education, a specialty group member of the National Council for the Accreditation for Teacher Education (NCATE)
environmental problem solving. They then reflect and formalize this in three formats, through the written word that may include poetry, prose, or scientific documenting, and then provide a visual record through photography or other artistic forms to complete the process.

The EPSB themes that are addressed include “diversity,” “literacy,” and the “achievement gap.” Diversity is addressed through connecting the need for human diversity through modeling this through ecological diversity that states the “health of an ecosystem is directly related to the amount of diversity displayed by the ecosystem.”

Literacy and achievement gaps are all connected to the research in the field and practice students have in the field through hands-on-minds-on activities that show how environmental education as a theme (Environment as an Integrating Context, EIC) impacts in a positive and significant way the outcomes of students in classroom and test score performance. This process also enables students to become civically engaged and connect on a broader and more global basis.

V. CONTENT OUTLINE: Using the chosen topic, project or problem to broaden the students' knowledge, understanding, awareness and potential for action regarding the following:
   a. Fundamentals of Environmental Education from variety of educational perspectives
   b. Basic ecology of our region
   c. Natural resource review of our region
   d. Environmental issues in our region
   e. Global applications of local issues
   f. Curriculum integration (scope and sequence) of environmental education subject matter
   g. Literature survey of current materials - texts, activities, audio-visual and computer assisted

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES: Field experiences in available Curriculum, ecological studies of various habitats and in depth study of available curriculum on the students' specific study. Student created projects will be shared with the class. A portion of the instructional time will be lecture for small groups and consultation with the professor in individual studies.
   a. Sample Projects/Activities:
   b. Teaching units in Environmental Education
   c. An action plan addressing specific environmental issues
   d. An integrated curriculum guide for environmental education
   e. An analysis of media coverage of an regional or local issue
   f. Review of literature
   g. An article submitted to a professional journal
   h. A plan to develop a school yard environmental study area.

VII. FIELD, CLINICAL AND/OR LABORATORY EXPERIENCES: Visits to classrooms and schoolyards, landfills, water treatment plants and the Resource Room of the Center for Environmental Education will provide field trip experiences. Orienteering, challenge course participation, participation in and direction of curriculum activities and leadership development will be an important component.
VIII. RESOURCES:

a. Kentucky Division of Water
b. Kentucky Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet
c. Center for Environmental Education, MSU
d. Land Between the Lakes - TVA
e. Western Kentucky Environmental Education Consortium

IX. GRADING PROCEDURES: A learning contract between the instructor and student is necessary for project completion and project descriptions as well as research design will vary with each individual.

X. ATTENDANCE POLICY: This course adheres to the policy published in the current *MSU Graduate Bulletin*.

XI. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY: This course adheres to the policy published in the current *MSU Graduate Bulletin*.

XII. TEXTS AND SELECTED REFERENCES: Project WILD, Project Learning Tree, Aquatic Wild, Project WET, Project Food, Land and People, WILD about Elk, Getting Started, Ten Minute Field Trips and Wild School Sites.

XIII. PREREQUISITES: NONE.

XIV. STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, marital status, age, or disability in employment, admission, or the provision of services, educational programs and activities, and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all programs and activities. For information regarding nondiscrimination policies contact the Office of Equal Opportunity, 270-809-3155.