



Land Stewardship Ambassadors

Bexar County Cohort: Witte Museum

Cameron County Cohort: Multiple Locations

Webb County Cohort: Multiple Locations

Sundays, 2-4:30 p.m.

Spring 2022

Contacts

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Course Description

Land Stewardship Ambassadors is a 10-week course for high school students offered by the Witte Museum and the East Foundation in order to increase awareness of land stewardship principles and promote civil engagement. This course is a *reading and writing intensive course* for high school students. There will be three cohorts of this course—one in Bexar County (San Antonio), one in Cameron County (Brownsville) and one in Webb County (Laredo). During the regular sessions, students will participate in discussion and activities related to a given topic. There will also be two special weekend-long sessions of the course, where all cohorts will come together in person—first at the Witte Museum in San Antonio and then at the East Foundation's San Antonio Viejo Ranch in Hebbbronville.

With the mutual goal of providing transformational experiences regarding land stewardship for the great state of Texas, the Witte Museum and the East Foundation are partnering to ensure that messages of land stewardship permeate all aspects of the Texas Wild exhibition, labs and educational programs. One outcome of this partnership is that children and adults will be empowered through a better

understanding of diverse ecosystems of the state, becoming educated citizens as it relates to water, habitat, land management and conservation issues.

Course Objective

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

- Discuss topics of Land Stewardship as it relates to the local and state communities
- Identify reputable sources for research
- Communicate effectively with a group of peers and instructors in order to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of topics related to Land Stewardship
- Act as an ambassador of the Witte Museum, the East Foundation and the Land Stewardship Ambassadors program to the general public

Required Texts will be provided and distributed ahead of required reading assignments. This course is a reading and writing intensive course.

What is a reading and writing intensive course? This means that this course has several readings per week and that instructors evaluate students based on their writing submissions.

Student Requirements

Students are expected to complete all weekly assignments, participate in weekly discussions, write reflections from their discussions and present a final project at the end of the semester.

Weekly Assignments

In order to make sure the students are engaging the text efficiently and thoughtfully, each student will write a T.Q.C. report and turn it in. These will be graded/annotated/checked and handed back to them the following week. The T.Q.C. report will have a deadline of Thursday at 5:00p.m. prior to the Sunday meeting. The "T" stands for thesis, which is where the students will write their own thesis statement that they think captures the main point of the text, minimum of 100 words. They will then find a particular quote ("Q") that caught their attention and write it down, minimum of 20 words. They will then comment ("C") on the significance of the quote and why it caught their attention and elaborate, minimum of 250 words.

T. Thesis (100 word minimum)

Write your own thesis statement that reflects the main idea of the assigned text/media.

Q. Quote (20 word minimum)

Record one quote that catches your attention that relates to the thesis.

C. Comment (250 word minimum)

Comment on the quote by explaining why it stood out to you and expand on its significance.

Sample TQC

Thesis:

Children are the future of the world and if environmentalists continue to ignore them, there will be no passionate earthy people for the future.

Quote:

“She gasped and grabbed my leg. She had never seen the stars before...She was a changed person. From that moment on, she saw everything, the camouflaged lizard that everyone else skipped by. She used her senses. She was awake.”

Comment:

This quote reminded me of the transition I feel every time I leave the city to go camping or hiking. It takes a while to stop being startled by every bug and to quit passing by plants without looking. Once you get all the way transitioned, everything is amazing and fascinating. I also notice that it takes longer with my family, thoroughly urbanized folks, than with girl scouts, a group of enthusiastic, earthy women I'm lucky to have. This chapter really emphasized the importance of children being in nature with adults who model appreciation and respect. It's dangerous to raise a generation indoors.

T.Q.C. Submission

The T.Q.C. report will have a deadline of Thursday at 5:00p.m. prior to the Sunday meeting. To submit a T.Q.C. the student will utilize a Google Classroom.

Final Project

Each student must develop a public presentation and deliver it to an audience as their final project. The project must be observed by an LSA instructor or recorded and submitted to the LSA instructors. The student will select a topic related to land stewardship and the presentation must be a minimum of five minutes and a maximum of eight minutes. Students will utilize a powerpoint template provided to them. Additionally, we will include deadlines for presentation topic, presentation abstract, presentation outline, and presentation powerpoint draft. This project will be assessed by the rubric attached to this document and will be discussed in further detail during the semester.

Participation

Student participation is essential for the successful completion of this course. Participation is defined as, but not limited to, the following:

- Completing and turning in a TQC each week on time
- Participating in a meaningful and productive way during class discussions each week
- Journaling reflections of each discussion which will be known as an exit ticket and completed after the facilitated discussion and submitted via a google form
- Attendance: Attending **7 out of 8** of the regular class sessions and **both** of the special weekend-long sessions

Course Policies and Information for Students

Inclusive Learning Environment Statement

The best learning environment—whether in the classroom, laboratory or fieldwork site—is one in which all members feel respected while being productively challenged. At the Witte Museum and the East Foundation, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive atmosphere, in which all participants can contribute, explore and challenge their own ideas as well as those of others. Every participant has an

active responsibility to foster a climate of intellectual stimulation, openness and respect for diverse perspectives, questions, personal backgrounds, abilities and experiences, although instructors bear primary responsibility for its maintenance.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to arrive on time to their designated meeting places and remain for the entirety of the scheduled time. They will attend a minimum of 7 out of 8 regular program sessions and both of the weekend-long full group sessions.

COVID-19 Statement

All sessions will be formatted according to the latest CDC guidelines per local onsite meeting locations. If the situation arises that the cohorts cannot meet in person, we will utilize the Zoom platform to meet virtually.

Attire

Students will be expected to dress in business casual with closed-toed shoes. Pants and Land Stewardship Ambassador Polo with closed toed shoes. If LSA polo is not available a blouse/shirt with sleeves and collar (no midriffs/croptops or sleeveless shirts).

Plagiarism

Academic integrity is vital to the success of the Land Stewardship Ambassadors program. Each students' level of understanding, knowledge, and ability to connect readings, videos, and discussions will be assessed via the exit ticket and final project.

Stipend

The \$400 stipend will only be awarded to students who successfully complete the course. The requirements for this are as follows:

- Student attended 7/8 of the regular class sessions
- Student attended both of the weekend-long sessions
- Student completed all coursework in a timely manner
- Student completed a final project and presented to a group of their peers in accordance with the provided rubric

Important Dates to Remember

- August 1, 2021 - Application period opens
- November 1, 2021 - Application period closes on
- Week of November 1st, 2021- LSA Selection Committee to meet and review applications
- November 8-12, 2021 - Zoom Interviews with semi-finalists. Each interview will last ten minutes
- November 15, 2021 – Finalists notified of Land Stewardship Ambassador Selection; will have two weeks to confirm participation
- December 12, 2021 – Student and Parent Informational Meeting to prep for Spring Semester

Preliminary Schedule of Readings, Topics and Other Assignments *(subject to change)

| Date | Topics/Assigned Readings | Assignments Due |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| December 12, 2021 2:00-4:30p.m. | Parent Informational Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bexar cohort will meet at The Witte Museum 3801 Broadway, San Antonio, TX 78209 Cameron cohort will meet at Camp Rio 280 Fish Hatchery Road, Brownsville, Texas 78520, United States Webb cohort will meet at Falcon Bank 7718 McPherson Rd # A, Webb, TX 78045 on the 2nd Floor | Pre-Test at meeting Distribute course materials via Google Classroom |
| January 22-23, 2022 | Mandatory – Overnight at the Witte Museum, San Antonio, TX Theme: What is a Land Steward? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Witte Museum Weekend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Bexar Cohort to meet at The Witte Museum at on Saturday *Cameron cohort will leave Brownsville on Saturday and return at on Sunday *Webb cohort will leave Laredo at on Saturday and return at on Sunday Time and locations will be shared as we get closer to the date Instructors will distribute binders and additional materials at The Witte Museum Students will practice TQC at The Witte Museum Pre-reading assignment: History of the Witte Museum from website https://www.witemuseum.org/history/ Pre-reading assignment: History of East Foundation Pre-reading assignment: Texas Farm Credit Pre-reading assignment: History of LSA program | Pre-Readings The Witte Museum East Foundation Texas Farm Credit History of LSA program |
| January 30 2:00-4:30p.m. | Theme: History of Conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Pre-reading assignment: Nature's Allies: Eight Conservationists Who Changed Our World</i> by Larry Nielson, assigned chapter <i>Pre-reading assignment: Nature's Allies: Eight Conservationists Who Changed Our World</i> by Larry Nielson, Chapter 3 – Aldo Leopold <i>Pre-reading assignment: Horses to Ride, Cattle to Cut</i> by Wyman Meinzer and Henry Chappell, pages 11-97 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Readings TQC - Due at 5:00p.m. |
| February 13 2:00-4:30p.m. | Theme: Public Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop led by professional public speaker <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Readings TQC - Due at 5:00p.m. |
| February 20 2:00-4:30p.m. | Theme: Water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Pre-reading assignment: Texas Watershed Stewardship Handbook</i> by Texas AgriLife Extension (Chapters 1 and 2) <i>Pre-reading assignment: "Making the Connection: Watersheds and our water supplies"</i> by Anna Huff <i>Pre-reading assignment: "Where the First Raindrop Falls"</i> by Larry D. Hodge <i>Pre-reading assignment: "Soil and Water"</i> by Steve Nelle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Readings TQC - Due at 5:00p.m. Final Presentation Abstract Due *will receive feedback/approval by next session |

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| <p>February 27 2:00-4:30p.m.</p> | <p>Theme: Political and Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> “How Laws are Made” https://www.usa.gov/how-laws-are-made • <i>Pre-viewing assignment:</i> Schoolhouse Rock: America- I’m Just a Bill https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFroMQIKiag • <i>Prior to our meeting:</i> Identify a current natural resource issue within your community. • <i>Prior to our meeting:</i> Research the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act and identify the main arguments for and against this bill. • <i>Pre-viewing assignment:</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rSY5Wa9gig | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-readings • Pre-viewings • TQC - at 5:00p.m. • Final Presentation Outline Due *will receive feedback/approval by next session |
| <p>March 6 2:00-4:30p.m.</p> | <p>Theme: Economics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> <i>An Initial Examination of the Economic Impact of Nature Tourism on the Rio Grande Valley</i> by Kyle M. Woosnam • <i>Pre-viewing assignment:</i> “Herd Impact” ft. Deborah Clark & Emery Birdwell https://vimeo.com/301414908 • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> “How America Uses its Land” https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2018-us-land-use/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-readings • Pre-viewings • TQC - at 5:00p.m. • Final Presentation Approved Outline to be put on powerpoint |
| <p>March 20 2-4:30pm</p> | <p>Theme: Human Dimensions – Public Benefits of Conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> Abstract only “The Health Benefits of Urban Nature: How Much Do We Need?” by Danielle F. Shanahan, et al https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/65/5/476/324489 • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> “Private Lands Public Trust” by Steve Nelle • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> <i>Last Child in the Woods</i>, chapter 12* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-readings • TQC - Due at 5:00p.m. • Present powerpoints to cohort within this week |
| <p>March 27 Time/Location TBD for all cohorts</p> | <p>Theme: Wildlife Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> <i>The Wildlife Techniques Manual, Volume 2: Management</i> by Nova Silvey (Chapter 31) • <i>Pre-viewing assignment:</i> Videos: America’s Wildlife Parts 1 and 2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPmV1smjWY and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdY9Dp8huug <p>Bring the following: sack lunch, water bottles, close-toed shoes, hat, sunscreen, binders, journals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and location of meetings is TBA for all cohorts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-readings • Pre-viewings • TQC - Due at 5:00p.m. |
| <p>April 3 2:00-4:30p.m.</p> | <p>Theme: Diversity in Conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-reading assignment:</i> <i>Black Faces White Spaces</i> by Carolyn Finney, Chapter 5 • <i>Pre-viewing assignment:</i> Bird-Watching While Black: A Wildlife Ecologist Shares His Tips, www.youtube.com/watch?v=aaPWAE34GJU • <i>Pre-viewing assignment:</i> Ron Finley, A Guerilla Gardener in South Central LA https://www.ted.com/talks/ron_finley_a_guerilla_gardener_in_south_central_la?language=en | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-readings • Pre-viewings • TQC - Due at 5:00p.m. • |
| <p>April 9-10</p> | <p>Mandatory – Overnight at the San Antonio Viejo Ranch, Hebbbronville, TX</p> <p>Theme: Bringing it all Together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Foundation’s San Antonio Viejo Ranch, Saturday-Sunday | <p>Post-Test</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All cohorts will leave cohort locations on Saturday departing to the San Antonio Viejo Ranch, Hebbronville, Texas and return on Sunday; Times and location are TBA• Pre-reading assignment: Wyman Meinzer, <i>Horses to Ride, Cattle to Cut</i>, pages 99-185 | |
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Zoom Practice Presentations with varying cohort 10 zoom meetings to allow for five students to present at each

Deadline for Final Presentation to a Public Audience June 1, 2022

Deadline for LSA Video Promo, Exit Survey, Exit Essay June 11, 2022

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