Ecopsychology MA (low-residency)

Ecopsychology integrates psychology with ecology in the study of human/nature relationships. At Naropa University, contemplative practice and transpersonal psychology provide a foundation for this integration. The result is a unique contemplative and transpersonal orientation to the field of ecopsychology. The low-residency Master of Arts in Ecopsychology program is a two-year, 38-credit program that begins with a residential intensive. It then continues with students learning from their own homes online during the fall and spring semesters. Students also attend a short intensive course in Boulder each spring, and a second summer intensive that includes a rites-of-passage wilderness camping trip. Course work integrates theory, experiential learning, and contemplative practice in the study of ecopsychology, which includes transpersonal psychology and ecoresilience strategies. This is not a clinical licensure program. Students complete both written and service-learning projects.

Degree Requirements

First year, fall
- PSYE600 Initiatory Contemplative Ecopsychology Intensive (4)
- PSYE630e Transpersonal Psychology (3)
- PSYE640e Ecopsychology (3)

First year, spring
- PSYE650 Winter Ecopsychology Intensive I (2)
- PSYE680e Ecology: Concepts and Applications for Ecopsychology (3)
- PSYE690e Ecopsychology Applied in Context (3)

First year, summer
- PSYE700 Ecopsychology Training Intensive (2)
- PSYE750 Psychology of Wilderness Experience Intensive (4)

Second year, fall
- PSYE800e Transpersonal Service Learning (3)
- PSYE850e Master’s Project I (3)

Second year, spring
- PSYE780 Winter Ecopsychology Intensive II (2)
- PSYE790e Transitions and Rites of Passage (3)
- PSYE890e Master’s Project Online (3)

Total Credits 38

Course Listings

PSYE511E
Meditation Practicum II (3.0)
In this class, we explore the Mahayana [Great Path] Buddhist teachings on compassion, loving-kindness, emptiness (the non-existence of a separate self), and the interconnectedness of all things. Students are introduced to the meditation practice of tonglen (exchanging oneself for others), and the warrior discipline of Lojong (mind training), first introduced in Tibet one thousand years ago and brought to the West by Naropa’s founder Chgyam Trungpa Rinpoche. This training is very direct and practical rather than philosophical, and emphasizes gentleness and skillful action in our everyday dealings with other people. Prerequisite: PSYE504e.

PSYE514E
The Diamond Approach (3.0)
The Diamond Approach is an original, thorough, and precise spiritual path developed and taught by A. H. Almaas. Introducing the main insights and concepts of the Diamond Approach, this course draws on modern psychology as well as timeless spiritual wisdom, offering a fresh approach to living fully and deeply. It provides precise descriptions of the characteristics of spiritual realization and its barriers. By understanding and working with these barriers, we are better able to fulfill our potential for a life of engagement, service, contentment, richness, depth, and mystery.

PSYE517E
Multicultural Issues: Contemplative Approaches (3.0)
In traditional cultures, healing occurs within community. There is a deep understanding of shared wounds and shared responsibility, as well as a desire to work together toward healing. We begin our work from within, looking to the past for aid and guidance. From there, we return to the present to bring understanding to our own personal and cultural wounds. We explore our own cultural backgrounds and, from this place, sit as compassionate witnesses to the pain and struggle of others. In community, we facilitate healing using storytelling, ritual, meditation, and guided imagery. We explore new ways to experience our shared humanness through deep wisdom, caring, and understanding.

PSYE600
Initiatory Contemplative Ecopsychology Training (4.0)
This first Intensive course introduces MA Ecopsychology students to the program and the field. It provides the opportunity for learning-community building and face-to-face instruction in ecopsychological, transpersonal, and contemplative practice processes such as nature connection exercises, ritual, and meditation, and the application of topics that will appear in the coming online courses. Students are expected to prepare for the course prior to attending, and to complete a written assignment afterward. This course does not lead to counseling licensure. Residential fee.

PSYE607E
Integral Psychology (3.0)
A course designed to take the student on a three-dimensional journey toward a deep understanding of this meta-theoretical approach to psychology. First, it involves an examination of the theory of integral psychology as the fifth force or wave in the historical development of the discipline of psychology. Second, it includes a critical analysis of integral theory as it evolved in Ken Wilber’s body of work. Throughout the course, students apply this evolutionary theory of consciousness in their own lives through the development of an ongoing integral life practice.
**PSYE618**
Transpersonal Psychology Intensive II (3.0)
These weeklong courses introduce MATE students to transpersonal psychology and provide in-depth exposure to current issues and developments in the field. They also provide the opportunity for community building, face-to-face instruction in transpersonal processes such as meditation and ritual, and application of topics from the online courses. Students are expected to prepare for the course prior to attending and to complete a written assignment after the course. MATE only.

**PSYE630E**
Transpersonal Psychology (3.0)
An introduction and examination of central concepts, theories, practices, and applications of transpersonal psychology. The theories of the central figures in the field are discussed and compared, as well as the roots of transpersonal psychology in the world wisdom traditions and multicultural considerations. Students explore foundations of transpersonal psychology and its applications to meditation, ritual, ecopsychology, psychological research, multicultural diversity, and other areas. This online course blends intellectual exploration, practice, and self-reflection. Required for MAE.

**PSYE640E**
Ecopsychology (3.0)
Ecopsychology is concerned with human and ecological health, and proposes that the well-being of both are intimately linked. Ecopsychology places psychology in an ecological context and draws on psychological insight for effective and sustainable environmental action. This online course integrates academic, experiential, and contemplative approaches in examining ecopsychological theory and practices.

**PSYE650**
Winter Contemplative Ecopsychology Intensive I (2.0)
The course focuses on advanced topics within ecopsychology, further builds community within the program, and aims to teach specific skills for working with individuals and groups in an ecopsychological context. Students' meditation practice and an understanding of its importance in ecopsychology are deepened. Open to first-year MA Ecopsychology students only.

**PSYE667W**
Ecopsychology Intensive II (1.0)
Building on previous courses, this course teaches theories and techniques of specific applications and practices for ecopsychology facilitators. Students have a chance to both observe these practices and practice them in the intensive course. A second purpose of this course is face-to-face community building in the low-residency MATE program. An in-depth self-assessment paper is required. Prerequisite: PSYE656W. Required for MATE.

**PSYE672E**
Transpersonal Psychology II: Theorists and Applications (3.0)
This course serves as a continuation of Transpersonal Psychology I and focuses on particular theorists and applications of transpersonal psychology in a variety of areas. Prerequisite: PSYE670E or an equivalent introduction to transpersonal psychology.

**PSYE680E**
Ecology: Concepts and Applications for Ecopsychology (3.0)
This online course reviews fundamental concepts in ecology and explores their relevance to ecopsychology. We explore organisms in their environment, population dynamics, community ecology, ecosystem dynamics, and Gaia Theory. A field component involves natural history investigations in each student's local bioregion. As a group, we develop a place-based perceptual ecology and inquire into the dynamic interrelationships between local ecology, global change, and the human psyche.

**PSYE690E**
Ecopsychology Applied in Context (3.0)
This online course deepens understanding about the field of ecopsychology by seating its concepts in cultural and applied contexts. Application of the ecopsychological principles for addressing contemporary ecological problems and ethics are examined, along with options for effective and compassionate action. Topics may include eco-spirituality, power dynamics and diversity in ecopsychology, ecofeminism, applied myth, climate change, bioregionalism, voluntary simplicity, and resilience.

**PSYE699**
Independent Study: Transpersonal Ecopsychology (0.5-4.0)

**PSYE700**
Ecopsychology Training Intensive (2.0)
Ecopsychology explores human/nature relationships and the implications of a deeper connection between human and nature for mental health, personal growth, environmental action, and sustainable lifestyles. This advanced course assumes an understanding of the theory and practices of ecopsychology. It is directed toward the interface of ecology, transpersonal psychology, and contemplative practice (i.e., nature, psyche, and spirit); critical evaluation of ecopsychological thinking; and the development and use of ecopsychology practices in personal and professional applications.

**PSYE720**
Meditation Practicum I: Cultivating Awareness (1.0)
This course is designed to support students in continuing the practice of mindfulness-awareness meditation begun in CNST621. Specific topics include applications of mindful-awareness to creativity, healing, and social action. Students meet in small groups for sitting and walking meditation sessions and discussion. Individual
PSYE750
Psychology of Wilderness Experience Intensive (4.0)
Through group process, experiential activities, and ritual, participants experience an ancient, pan-cultural, earth-centered rite of passage in a wilderness setting. This course follows the traditional stages of a rite of passage: severance (leaving behind what is familiar); threshold (three days and nights of solitude/fasting); and reincorporation (bringing back gifts or insights to the community). Open to the transformative power of nature, participants have the opportunity to inquire deeply and directly into themselves and their relationship to the natural world and their community. Participants provide their own camping equipment and share food and transportation. There is a $500 activity fee for this course.

PSYE780
Winter Contemplative Ecopsychology Intensive II (2.0)
Building on previous courses, this course teaches theories and techniques of specific applications and practices for ecopsychology facilitators. Students have a chance to both observe these practices and practice them in the intensive course. A second purpose of this course is face-to-face community building in the low-residency MATE program. An in-depth self-assessment paper is required. Prerequisite: PSYE656W.

PSYE790E
Transitions and Rites of Passage (3.0)
This course explores life transitions, both predictable and unexpected, and the role of rites of passage in giving them meaning and support. Developmental psychology, transpersonal psychology, anthropology, and ecopsychology provide foundations as the course helps students integrate theoretical and experiential perspectives.

PSYE800E
Transpersonal Service Learning (3.0)
Students apply and deepen their learning about transpersonal ecopsychology through service in their communities. With guidance from program faculty, students arrange a service-learning project related to an ecopsychological area of their choice. Online course lectures, reading, and discussion support learning by examining the nature of transpersonal approaches to service, and by providing a forum for interaction and support among students and faculty. A final written paper or media project integrates students’ project experiences with theoretical knowledge about the area of service and understanding of transpersonal service. While the Service Learning placement may be independent of the Master’s Project topic, the department recommends that students try to connect them.

PSYE850E
Master’s Project I (3.0)
This is the first of a two-course sequence in which students apply and deepen their learning through completion of a major written paper or media project on a particular ecopsychological topic of their choice. The online course environment supports this by staged assignments and providing a forum for interaction and support among students and faculty.

PSYE890E
Masters Project II (3.0)
The second of a two-course sequence in which students complete a major written or media project on an ecopsychology topic of their choice. In this second-semester course, students complete the project. Prerequisite: Successful completion of PSYE850e.

PSYE892E
Extended Masters Project (0.5)
An extension of the sequence of two courses leading students to complete the master’s project. It is offered in the event that a student does not complete the paper within the given time. Prerequisite: PSYE890e.