

Personal Representation Project

- The project is intended to initiate explorations of "sense-of-place" through reflexive (autobiographical) inquiry into notions of one's ecological identity. One's ecological identity is personal, idiosyncratic, derived from a lifetime of experience making sense of the physical / ecological environments and a recognition of one's response and responsibility regarding humans' place in complex ecosystems. Ecological identity is a notion that helps frame explorations of sense of place. Indeed the two are symbiotic.
- The project honors the metaphorical and geographical places where we each dwell, work and recreate. Through the project, greater understandings of self in relation to a complex world can be had. A hopeful outcome is new or renewed sense of responsibility towards the natural world.
- The project relies on stories of personal experience as starting points to the creation of textual and arts-informed narratives. Your research should be directed toward explorations of relevant personal history-based experiences and their meanings focusing, especially, on the place of prior experiences in particular (natural and human-made) ecological / environmental contexts and the forming of subsequent sensitivities in developing orientations to one's personal and vocational activities. It is particularly relevant to teachers who are keen to establish and articulate their groundedness in place, to think about what kind of teacher they want to be, and to help formulate a philosophy of teaching. The task here includes the integration of the arts to come to an understanding as well as articulate that understanding.
- I have no particular format in mind for the assignment, so be creative.
- I will not be using a quantitative evaluation process to grade your work. I do, however, expect graduate students to do "A" quality work. Collectively, we have to work together in "good faith" which means openly conversing about problems and issues of concern associated with the teaching/learning process and the tasks at hand. Since this is a thinking/writing intensive process, we will have several discussions and examples leading up to the due date.
- I invite you to submit a one paragraph self-assessment of your engagement and learnings in this project with appropriate rationales. What grade to you give yourself and why?
- You will be asked to exhibit your project and share it with the class (max 5 minutes).

This project is inspired and based on Dr. J.G. Knowles' final project in Sense-of-Place: Reflective, Artful Inquiry and Ecological Identity Course