STUDENT'S GUIDE

Environmental Psychology

Year:
2016-2017

STUDENT'S GUIDE

1. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE COURSE

COURSE TITLE: Environmental Psychology

CODE: 25069		YEAR: 2016-2017	
TYPE OF COURSE= P (D=Básica de Rama; S=Básica otras Ramas; Y=Proyecto fin de grado; O=Obligatoria o P=Optativa)			
ECTS credits: 4,5	LEVEL: Any		FOUR-MONTH TERM: First
Prerequisites: -			
Recommendations: -			

2. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE TEACHING TEAM

NAME: Laura Vozmediano Sanz		
SCHOOL/DEPARTAMENT: Psychology Faculty /Department of Social Psychology and Methodology of the Behavioural Sciences		
KNOWLEDGE AREA: Social Psychology		
OFFICE: 2D8	E-MAIL: laura.vozmediano@ehu.es	Phone: 943015286
URL WEB:		
NAME: César San Juan Guillén		
SCHOOL/DEPARTAMENT: Psychology Faculty /Department of Social Psychology and Methodology of the Behavioural Sciences		
KNOWLEDGE AREA: Social Psychology		
OFFICE: 2E4	E-MAIL cesar.sanjuan@ehu.es	Phone: 943015664
URL WEB:		

3. SPECIFIC AND CROSS CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES OF THE COURSE

Number	Competency
1	Be capable of analysing the psychological and social dimension of the human being in relation to his/her behaviour setting
2	Be capable of distinguishing between the fields of application of Ecological Psychology and Architectural Psychology
3	Know the most efficient intervention strategies for promoting urban quality of life
4	Handle the techniques and instruments commonly used for the assessment, measurement and promotion of environmentally responsible behaviour
5	Know the instruments and indicators used in an Environmental Impact Assessment as well as the ethic responsibilities of such assessments
6	Know the documental sources commonly used in the discipline as well as be capable of successfully submitting a written report and defend it orally.
7	Be capable of working in multidisciplinary teams
8	Know the sources of scientific data commonly used in Environmental Psychology and show command of the necessary strategies for successfully accessing relevant information

4. PLANIFICATION
4.1. EXTENDED TOPICS LIST

In this course, the theoretical content is structured in six topics. In the first one, we analyse the relations between the human being and the environment and introduce the most widely used methodologies in Environmental Psychology. In the second one, we study the perception of the environments and its meaning, as well as the emotional experience of the environments. In the third and fourth ones, we focus on the experience of the urban environments, and study the residential satisfaction before going deeper into the psychosocial aspects of the urban problems. In the fifth and sixth topics, we analyse the pro-environmental attitudes and beliefs and the ecologically responsible behaviours, thus considering psychosocial variables impacting on sustainable development at the individual level; and finally we study the role of institutions and enterprises in this matter.
*In theoretical lessons we work the competencies number **1, 2, 3** and **5**.*

Extended topic list:

1. Studying the human-environment relationship
Environmental Psychology is the discipline that studies all elements –real and/or symbolic ones-

implied in the relation between humankind and their environment. In this course, we will discover the different roles of the environmental psychologist, as well as the research areas of the discipline, that come from describing and trying to explain this relation.

In this first topic of the course, we will reflect about the relation of humankind to the physical surroundings, and next we will present the origins and evolution of the discipline until present day. It will be relevant to understand the difference between two main areas of research and application within Environmental Psychology (Architectural Psychology and Ecological Psychology). Finally, we will try to offer a comprehensive definition of the discipline, as well as the main characteristics and application fields that we are working on nowadays.

Topic outline:

    1.1.- Introduction to Environmental Psychology
    1.2.- A brief review of the history of Environmental Psychology
        1.2.1. 'Prehistory'
        1.2.2. Period of institutionalisation
        1.2.3. Period of consolidation and development
    1.3.- Events that contributed to the development of EP
    1.4.- Two branches in EP
    1.4.- Definitions and professional opportunities

2. Environmental perception and meaning

Explaining how people perceive the world surrounding them is key for understanding the human behaviour. Perception, as a mean of knowing the world, does not finish when we describe the physiological channel that makes it possible; it is mostly related to how we acquire, organise and use this knowledge. However, we cannot ignore the role played by perceptive processes in environmental cognition, and therefore we start the topic by describing some of its essential aspects.

But as environmental psychologists, we are aware that perception is also dependent on a concrete socialization process -based on language- that will determine how we capture stimuli from our environment. This is the reason why Environmental Psychology is more closely related to Social Psychology than to Psychology of Perception, as pointed out by Canter & Stringer (1978:31). From this perspective, the most significative aspect will be the meaning attached to the stimuli from the environment, more than the physiological acquisition way, and thus we will study the environmental meaning and the processes of spatial appropriation. Finally, we will analyse the landscape perception, a main research area in the discipline, that in the last years has evolved from the interest in landscape preferences to the restorative capacity of some landscapes –mainly natural ones- and to the relation between both variables.

Topic outline:

    2.1. Introduction to environmental perception
    2.2. Environmental perception and meaning: the emotional experience of the environment
        2.2.1. Components of the environmental meaning
        2.2.2. Stages on the process of environmental perception
    2.3. Special topics in environmental perception
        2.3.1. Landscape preferences
    2.3.2. Sound landscapes

3. The experience of the urban space

This is the first of two topics where we will pay attention to the urban environment. In the first one we describe the basic concepts for understanding the urban experience, that will allow the student to go deeper –in the next topic- into the challenges and difficulties of today's cities, characterized as 'urban-pathologies' and into their interdependent relation to human behaviour in

the urban environment. More concretely, in this first topic we analyse how human beings codify and store spatial information collected from the environments they use, in cognitive maps; maps that they later use for orientation and efficient mobility (wayfinding). We will next study the meaningful relation we establish to the several levels of the urban space, analysing three key variables for Environmental Psychology: residential satisfaction, urban social identity and place attachment. Finally, we will present a tool for evaluating built environment that will be used by the students in the field practice: the post-occupancy evaluation.

Topic outline:

> 3.1. Cognitive maps & wayfinding
>> 3.1.1. Psychological functions of the cognitive maps
> 3.1.2. Elements in Cognitive Maps
>> 3.1.3. Distortions and bias
>> 3.1.4. Wayfinding, orientation and maps
> 3.2. Residential satisfaction
>> 3.2.1. Levels of analysis
>> 3.2.2. Housing as a key element for social integration
>> 3.2.3. Definitions and theoretical perspectives in residential satisfaction
> 3.3. Post Occupancy Evaluation

4. Eco-pathologies and human behaviour

The human behaviour is influenced by the environment; environment that has been previously modified by human behaviour. The resulting spiral is useful for explaining health and illness from an ecological point of view. Talking specifically about the urban habitat, the city has inside its borders the most serious socio-economic problems of the planet. The situation in cities in the third world is particularly dramatic, where the lack of infrastructure for channelling, treating or recycling waste is the origin of deteriorated landscapes and multiple health problems. Less serious is the situation of the western developed cities, but we can still describe some negative consequences for human behaviour that happen in our urban habitats. After presenting some classic studies, we will go deeper in the description of two urban eco-pathologies: acoustic pollution and crime and delinquency.

As a final reflexion we will discuss the interdependency between the management of several urban problems and the impact that our behaviour has on the natural environment. Since the most part of world population is living in cities, how we manage the behaviours with impact on Nature –energy consumption, waste management, and so on- will be key for achieving (o not) the sustainable development. Behaviours with impact on Nature will be studies in topics 4 and 5.

Topic outline:

> 4.1. The city as a behaviour setting
> 4.2. Social problems from the eco -urban perspective
>> 4.2.1. Acoustic pollution and behaviour
>> 4.2.2. The ecology of crime
> 4.3. Urban quality of life

5. Pro-environmental attitudes and environmentally responsible behaviour

The last two topics are related to the study of one of the most pressing problems that humankind faces nowadays: the deteriorated natural environment and the climate change, as a consequence of human activities. Environmental Psychology, mostly from the point of view of its branch labelled as Ecological Psychology, has studied the beliefs and attitudes towards the Nature as well as the conservation behaviours (or the resource wasting behaviours). In this fifth topic we study the "ecologically responsible" behaviours from the individual point of view, trying to understand the attitudes and behaviours of citizens in relation to the natural environment. The

last aim is to present the theoretical models developed for explaining and predicting these behaviours, but also to describe the applications for designing and implementing programmes for promoting ecological behaviours. We also discuss the difficulties for modifying this type of behaviour and maintaining changes in time.

After this individual perspective, in the last topic we will study the activities with impact in Nature but from an organizational point of view, applying to institutions and enterprises the proposals for sustainable development and the tools for environmental management.

Topic outline:

       5.1. "Environmental concern" vs. consumption and development level
       5.2. Measuring pro-environmental attitudes & beliefs
          5.2.1. Pro-environmental attitudes
          5.2.2. Environmental beliefs
          5.2.3. Models for predicting Environmentally Responsible Behaviours
       5.3. Conclusions (challenges for the environmental psychologist)

6. Sustainable development and environmental management

When discussing about human impacts on Nature, we have no choice but to consider what we do as a society, what is the role of our public institutions. In this sense, the concept of sustainable development is frequently mentioned as an objective we should reach; as a consequence our well-being would not after future generations. We will start by discussing this concept, and next we will present the tools that institutions and enterprises could apply for trying to get it. We will describe several tools, pointing out the role that environmental psychologists could play in this area, and giving real examples of public and private cases. We will pay special attention to the Environmental impact assessment, a classic tool for preventing impacts of projects on Nature. Finally, we will close the topic (and the course) with a reflexion about the role of an environmental psychologist in the current social and economic context.

Topic outline:

       6.1. Sustainable vs. development?
       6.2. Environmental Management: concept and tools
       6.3. Environmental impact assessment: the role of the environmental psychologist
       6.4. The social and environmental psychologist in the face of the ecological and economic crisis: reflections

4.2. PRACTICAL PROGRAMME (*)

We propose a teaching methodology that combines theoretical classes with a series of practical activities, in order to facilitate the achievement of the competencies by the student. Practical activities are designed for applying the theoretical concepts to real-life problems, for discussing some issues that are not covered in theoretical classes and for developing the transversal competencies. The virtual classroom E-gela, is a key tool for providing the students with the working plan and materials they will need; and also for providing them with the evaluation criteria that will help focusing their efforts.

The planning of the practical programme, along with the description of the activities is presented hereunder.

Development of the competencies 1, 2, 3, 4 & 8.

Independent sessions. Individual or team activities will be carried out. The work carried out in each session will be presented in a final **personal portfolio** where the tasks will be described and documented. We use different dynamics of work, but in all the cases the aim is to go deeper, work in examples o take a different point of view about the issues covered in theoretical classes. When describing and documenting this work, student wil have to include a theoretical basis, relating the tasks done in practice activities to the concept studied in class, and broaden this contextualisation with additional resources. Therefore, by elaborating a good portfolio, the student will be proving that he/she has is capable of integrating in a coherent way what we have been studying and practising.

Classroom practices (11 sessions):
We will do additional work on some issues and concepts mentioned in theoretical classes. In these sessions, we have a more dynamic working plan with more opportunities for discussion among students and for analysing real cases in small groups. Sessions:
- Restorative environments
- Analysis of real cognitive maps
- Intervention after disasters
- Post occupancy evaluation of the Carlos Santamaria building
- Public spaces and city models
- Crime maps (and perception of safety)
- Smart Cities
- Promoting environmentally responsible behaviours
- Environmental education
- Sustainability in organizations

Development of the competence 1.

Final seminar (two hours):
Analysis of an example of current affairs using contents and strategies studied in Environmental Psychology and a final reflection about the discipline and the work the student has carried out through the course.

The students will analyze a real-life case with socio-environmental implications. They should be able to contrast their previous beliefs about the examined issue with the scientific evidence available, and giving their evaluation of the situation as environmental psychologist, not as a citizen; adding a final –ideally deep- reflection about the discipline.

We will choose social problems or issues that are relevant or treated in the mass media when we do this final classroom practice.

Development of the competencies 6 & 7.

Continued work in a stable team and a final presentation in the classroom. The students will work in a stable team, in order to achieve the transversal competencies (using the scientific databases, defending a report, working in teams). They will form 3-4 student teams, and choose an article of the last volumes of one of the main scientific journal of the field, that they find particularly interesting. Then each team will work for understanding the article contribution and implications, and they will present the main contents of the article in a simulated "Conference on Environmental Psychology".

Presenting their own work, but also listening to the presentations by the other teams in class, the students will have more opportunities to understand human behaviour in its socio-physical environment, with perspectives or applications not studies in theoretical classes, so they can broaden their own point of view of the discipline. A set of criteria published in the e-gela will be used for evaluating their presentation and the ppt file (or alternative formats) they use.

Classroom practice (1 session):
• Introduction to the work that will be done, first ideas for choosing a topic.

Computer practice (3 sessions)
▪ Choosing a paper and looking for additional information in databases.
▪ First reading and a basic outline of contents
▪ Understanding the topic and reflection on how to add additional information.
▪ Working on the state of the art, the scientific problem and the objectives and hypotheses. Structure of the script.
▪ Understanding the method, results and discussion. Final version of the script.

Classroom practice (2 sessions):
▪ Environmental Psychology Conference: presentations by the teams (2 hours).

5.- COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	DATES	Theoretical classes	Classroom practice	Computer practice	Seminar	Face-to-face hours	Autonomous work hours	Deliverable
1	05/09-09/09	3	-	-	-	3	3	
2	12/09-16/09	2	1	-	-	3	3	
3	19/09-23/09	2	1	-	-	3	3	
4	26/09-30/09	2	1	-	-	3	3	
5	03/10-07/10	2	1	-	-	3	3	
6	10/10-14/10	2	1	-	-	3	3	
7	17/10-21/10	2	1	-	-	3	3	
8	24/10-28/10	2	1	1	-	4	3	X (Evolution of PF)
9	31/10-04/11	2	1	-	-	3	3	
10	07/11-11/11	2	1	1	-	4	3	X (Team Project topic)
11	14/11-18/11	2	1	-	-	3	3	
12	21/11-25/11	1	1	1	-	3	3	
13	28/11-02/12	-	1	2	-	3	3	
14	05/12-09/12					0	0	
15	12/12-16/12	-	2	-	2	4	3	X (Presentation)
16	19/12-23/12	-	-	-	-	0	3	X (Portfolio)
		24	14	5	2	45	45	

6. EVALUATION SYSTEM

In the Environmental Psychology course we use a system for evaluating competencies, based on learning indicators. We offer two alternatives for evaluation the achievement of the competencies: the A option implies regular assistance to classes and a commitment to follow the development of tasks and activities through the course, working in a stable team for some activities. In the B option students are evaluated only in a final exam; this is an alternative system for those that will not commit to assist and participate in the standard system.

A option – Regular assistance to classes

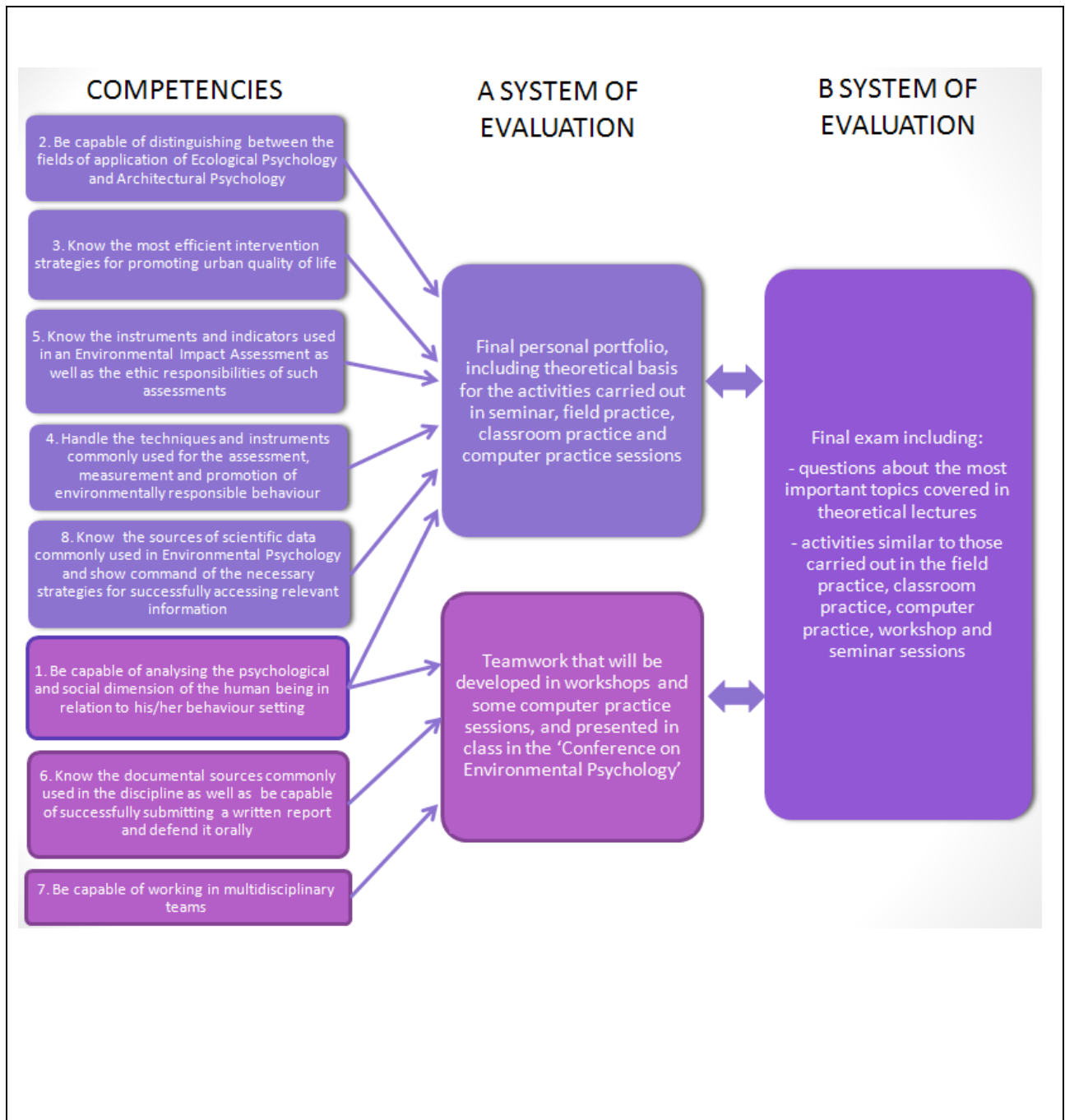| Grade (Up to 10 points)	Grading system	Requirements
Up to 6 points	Final personal portfolio, including theoretical basis for the activities carried out in seminar, field practice, classroom practice and computer practice sessions	▪ Regular assistance to classes ▪ Personal meeting at the middle of the course for planning the portfolio ▪ Personal meeting at the end of the course for defending the portfolio
Up to 4 points	Teamwork that will be developed in workshops and some computer practice sessions, and presented in class	▪ Attendance to 100% of these sessions ▪ Presentation in the final seminar
Please note: Students must pass each part independently in order to pass the course		

Please note: If a student has followed the A option but decides not to be evaluated in the present semester, he/she can present a renunciation letter at the Secretary of the Faculty directed to the Professor, at least 10 days before than the beginning of the official exam period.

B option – Final exam

Grade (Up to 10 points)	Grading system – Final exam (January)
Up to 10 points	Final exam including short questions about the most important topics covered in theoretical lectures and activities similar to those carried out in the field practice, classroom practice, computer practice, workshop and seminar sessions

Please note: If a student has NOT followed the A option, not attending the official date of the examination will imply that the student will not be evaluated in the present semester.

Both systems have been designed for evaluating the degree of achievement of the competencies, as it can be seen in the following figure. Nevertheless, we consider thtat the optimal system, and therefore the one recommended by the teaching team, is the A option.

COMPETENCIES

2. Be capable of distinguishing between the fields of application of Ecological Psychology and Architectural Psychology

3. Know the most efficient intervention strategies for promoting urban quality of life

5. Know the instruments and indicators used in an Environmental Impact Assessment as well as the ethic responsibilities of such assessments

4. Handle the techniques and instruments commonly used for the assessment, measurement and promotion of environmentally responsible behaviour

8. Know the sources of scientific data commonly used in Environmental Psychology and show command of the necessary strategies for successfully accessing relevant information

1. Be capable of analysing the psychological and social dimension of the human being in relation to his/her behaviour setting

6. Know the documental sources commonly used in the discipline as well as be capable of successfully submitting a written report and defend it orally

7. Be capable of working in multidisciplinary teams

A SYSTEM OF EVALUATION

Final personal portfolio, including theoretical basis for the activities carried out in seminar, field practice, classroom practice and computer practice sessions

Teamwork that will be developed in workshops and some computer practice sessions, and presented in class in the 'Conference on Environmental Psychology'

B SYSTEM OF EVALUATION

Final exam including:

- questions about the most important topics covered in theoretical lectures

- activities similar to those carried out in the field practice, classroom practice, computer practice, workshop and seminar sessions

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

CORE BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Bechtel, R.B. y Churchman, A. (Eds.) (2002). *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Aragonés, J.I. y Amérigo, M. (2010). *Psicología Ambiental*. Madrid: Pirámide. 3ª edición

Jiménez Burillo, F. y Aragonés, J.I. (1986). *Introducción a la Psicología Ambiental*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

ADDITIONAL:

Amérigo, M. (1995). *Satisfacción residencial. Un análisis psicológico de la vivienda y su entorno*. Madrid: Alianza Universidad

Bechtel, R. B. (1996, Nov). The paradigm of environmental psychology. *American Psychologist, 51*, 1187 1188.

Bechtel, R.B. y Churchman, A. (Eds.) (2002). *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Canter, D. (1974). *Psychology for architects*. New York: Wiley

Corraliza, J.A. (1987). *La experiencia del ambiente. Percepción y significado del medio construido*. Madrid: Tecnos.

Gifford, R. (2007). *Environmental psychology: Principles and practice (4th ed.).* Colville, WA: Optimal Books.

Proshansky, H. M. (1976). Environmental psychology and the real world. *American psychologist, 31*, 303-310.

Ross, L. y Nisbett, R.E. (1991). *The person and the situation*. New York: McGraw Hill.

San Juan, C. et al. (2003): *MedioAmbiente y Participación*. Bilbao: Servicio de Publicaciones de la UPV/EHU.

Stokols, D. y I. Altman [Eds.] (1987). *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*. New York: Wiley.

Vozmediano, L. y San Juan, C. (2010). *Criminología Ambiental: Ecología del delito y de la seguridad*. Barcelona: UOC.

INTERNET RESOURCES:

Scientific journals:
- ✓ Journal of Environmental Psychology
- ✓ Environment and Behaviour
- ✓ Psyecology (Antes: MedioAmbiente y ComportamientoHumano)

Other online resources:

International Association People-Environment Studies: http://www.iaps-association.org/
Laboratorio de Evaluación del DiseñoAmbiental: http://www.ual.es/~bfernan/index.html
The International Society for Ecological Psychology:
    http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/ecopsyc/isep/index.html
MSc Environmental Psychology (University of Surrey):
http://www.surrey.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/environmentalpsychology/
European Commission - Directorate-General for Climate Action:
    http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/clima/mission/index_en.htm
United Nations - Division for Sustainable Development - Publications (English & Spanish):http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_publcorepubli.shtml
The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-HABITAT:http://www.unhabitat.org/

8. OFFICE HOURS
You can check the office hours of Laura Vozmediano in the e-gela (virtual classroom) of the course and at the door of the office.