

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS (PHIL 229)
Spring 2012

PROFESSOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Emerging in the 1970s, the field of environmental ethics began by sparking a rich line of philosophical inquiry largely focused on the moral status of the natural world and the non-human entities within it. What reasons do we have to give moral consideration to the environment? And what do we mean when we say we have a moral duty toward the environment? Do we have moral duties to individuals within a species, or to species themselves, or to ecosystems, or to...? What issues regarding justice are raised by environmental problems? This course will invite you to reflect on key philosophical works that engage these and related questions.

TEXTS

Louis P. Pojman and Paul Pojman, eds., *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*

Ronald Sandler and Philip Cafaro, eds., *Environmental Virtue Ethics*

Lewis Vaughn, *Writing Philosophy: A Student's Guide to Writing Philosophy Essays*

CLASS SCHEDULE

Introduction to Ethics and Environmental Ethics

Monday, January 23

General Introduction: No Reading

Wednesday, January 25

Palmer, "An Overview of Environmental Ethics," in Pojman

Friday, January 27

Shue, "Global Environment and International Inequality," in Pojman

Monday, January 30

Hill, "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments," in both texts

The Moral Status of Non-human Animals

Wednesday, February 1

Kant, "Rational Beings Alone Have Moral Worth," in Pojman
Wilson, "The Green Kant: Kant's Treatment of Animals," in Pojman

Friday, February 3

Singer, "A Utilitarian Defense of Animal Liberation," in Pojman

Monday, February 6

Regan, "The Radical Egalitarian Case for Animal Rights," in Pojman
Warren, "A Critique of Regan's Animal Rights Theory," in Pojman

Wednesday, February 8

Jamieson, "Against Zoos," in Pojman

Environmental Virtue Ethics

Friday, February 10

Van Wensveen, "The Emergence of Ecological Virtue Language," in Sandler

Monday, February 13

Re-read Hill
Schmidtz and Zwolinski, "Virtue Ethics and Repugnant Conclusions," in Sandler

Wednesday, February 15

Holmes Rolston III, "Environmental Virtue Ethics: Half the Truth but Dangerous as a Whole," in Sandler

Friday, February 17

Westra, "Virtue Ethics as Foundational for a Global Ethic," in Sandler

Interlude on Writing Philosophy Papers

Monday, February 20

Begin Vaughn

Wednesday, February 22

Finish Vaughn

Environmental Virtue Ethics Continued

Friday, February 24

Shaw, "A Virtue Ethics Approach to Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic," in Sandler

Monday, February 27

Frasz, "Benevolence as an Environmental Virtue," in Sandler

Wednesday, February 29

Cafaro, "Gluttony, Arrogance, Greed, and Apathy: An Exploration of Environmental Vice," in Sandler

Friday, March 2

FIRST PAPER DUE

Van Wensveen, "Cardinal Environmental Virtues," in Sandler

Value in Nature Itself (All Readings in Pojman)

Monday, March 5

Holmes Rolston, III, "Naturalizing Values"

Hettinger, "Comments on Holmes Rolston's 'Naturalizing Values'"

Wednesday, March 7

Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep"
Naess, "Ecosophy T"

Friday, March 9

Devall and Sessions, "Deep Ecology"
Fox, "Deep Ecology"

Spring Break (No Classes)

Monday, March 19

Watson, "A Critique of Anti-Anthropocentric Ethics"

Wednesday, March 21

Bookchin, "Social Ecology Versus Deep Ecology"

Friday, March 23

Guha, "Radical Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique"

Ecological Ethics [All Readings from Pojman]

Monday, March 26

Russow, "Why Do Species Matter?"

Wednesday, March 28

Schweitzer, "Reverence for Life"

Friday, March 30

Taylor, "Biocentric Egalitarianism"

Monday, April 2

Leopold, "Ecocentric Ethics"

Wednesday, April 4

Callicott, "The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic"

Friday, April 6

SECOND PAPER DUE

Stone, "Should Trees Have Standing?"

Population and Consumption [All Readings from Pojman]

Monday, April 9

Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons"

Wednesday, April 11

Kasum, "The Unjust War against Population,"

Friday, April 13

Hardin, "Lifeboat Ethics"

Murdoch and Oaten, "Population and Food"

Environmental Justice [All Readings from Pojman]

Monday, April 16

Engel, "Hunger, Duty and Ecology"

Wednesday, April 18

Friday, April 20

Wenz, "Just Garbage"

Monday, April 23

No Class

Wednesday, April 25

Westra, "Environmental Risks, Rights, and the Failure of Liberal Democracy"

Friday, April 27

Laduke, "All Our Relations"

Monday, April 30

THIRD PAPER DUE
Review Discussion

REQUIREMENTS

First Paper (March 2) 30% of Grade

The paper may be on any topic in environmental ethics. Most papers are about 8-10 pages in length. The paper may not, however, be shorter than 1,500 words or longer than 3,000 words not including footnotes. Note that each of the papers required for the course will be graded on the basis of content, organization, clarity and mechanics such as grammar and spelling. What matters most, however, is the philosophical analysis. [See my essay on writing philosophy papers.]

Second Paper (April 6) 30% of Grade

The second paper should also be a topic in environmental ethics that differs from your first paper.

Third Paper (April 30) 30% of Grade

This paper should be a rewritten version of one of your first two papers. Turn in a copy of your previous paper and a brief memo stating how you revised it. In addition to content, organization, clarity and mechanics the grade will be based on the quality of the revisions. Because of this, the revised paper could receive a lower grade than the original.

Class Participation 10% of Grade

Class participation should reflect your knowledge of the readings and advance the class discussion.

SOME POLICIES

Students who want an incomplete must petition for the incomplete in writing. The petition must include an incomplete form with your signature and suggested dates for completion of the work.

Grades for papers will be reduced by one grade point for each day they are late.

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented

disabilities. Please meet with the Associate Dean of Students, Lisa Landreman, who will serve as the coordinator for services for students with disabilities. It is important to meet with her at the beginning of the semester to ensure that your accommodations are approved and in place to begin the semester successfully.