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...? This course will invite you to reflect on key philosophical works that engage these and related questions. You will also have the opportunity to think about significant emerging topics in environmental ethics. Depending on the semester, these may include the debate over the ethics of wilderness preservation; the challenges of expanding environmental ethics to address issues of global climate change and resource sustainability; environmental rights; and environmental justice.

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:20-2:50 in Old Main 009

Instructor: Dr. Amy Ihlan
Email: ihlan@macalester.edu
Office: Old Main 100
Phone: 651-336-3930 (cell)
Office Hours: TTh 11:30am to 1 pm; W 1:00pm-3:00pm, or by appointment in person or online. Please check in with me before or after class or send an email to set up a time.

Required Readings:
No textbooks are required for this course.
Readings will be posted on Moodle (M) or available online or through the Macalester Library.

Course Requirements and Assignments
1. Papers: You will write 3 short papers on topics to be assigned. You will be asked to analyze issues in environmental philosophy and/or apply them to environmental problems, with a focus on explaining your reasons and making arguments.
2. Final Exam: There will be a take-home final exam, format and coverage to be announced.
3. Conversation Starters/Class Discussion Questions: Every student will prepare conversation starter questions (“convos”) for 15 different classes during the semester, for a total of 30 possible points. A successful convo demonstrates close analysis of a relevant text and raises at least one interesting and significant issue for class discussion. Some conversation starters may be read in class as a basis for discussion. Questions for a given day should be emailed to your professor (ihlan@macalester.edu) by 11:00 PM on the night before the relevant reading(s) will be discussed. Late/make-up convos will not be accepted for points. Only one convo may be submitted per class session.
Convos will be graded from 0-2 points. Good convos should specifically engage the readings, and raise questions that go beyond reporting on what the text says. Good convos should also spark and guide further discussion. Here are some illustrations:

**Example of grade 0:** I totally disagree with Kant’s Categorical Imperative, and don’t understand what the big deal is.

**Example of grade 1:** In Chapter 10 of FE, Shafer-Landau discusses problems with consequentialism, and talks about the differences between rule consequentialism and what he calls "act utilitarianism". Can we discuss this further?

**Example of grade 2:** In Chapter 18 of EX, p. 146, Julia Driver interprets Aristotle to say that: “The virtuous person not only does the right thing, but he does the right thing in the right way – in the right sort of emotional or psychological state.” But what kinds of emotional or psychological states are the “right sort”? Is this theory of ethics helpful in guiding real world decision-making? How might Driver or Aristotle respond to these questions?

**Note:** It is important to submit convos regularly during the semester to earn full credit for this assignment – and 30 points will make a difference in your final course grade (see point grading scale below).

4. **Group Project:** Students will do collaborative work in groups on a topic in environmental ethics, and share their work with class. We will work on the group projects across the semester. Student groups will have the opportunity to choose their topics, assign class readings in consultation with the professor, and present and lead class discussion (scheduled during the last two weeks of the semester).

5. **Participation:** Subject to the pandemic teaching and learning guidelines outlined below, students are encouraged and expected to attend all class meetings and participate in class discussions and activities. Students are also expected to read all assigned materials before class, and be prepared to analyze and discuss them. You can earn up to 10 points for your active participation in the course. If you attend class, do the readings in advance, and regularly contribute to discussion in a thoughtful way, you will receive 10; otherwise, you will receive less than 10. Please feel free to talk to me if you have questions about participation expectations.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>A = 187 - 200 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>A- = 180 - 186 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>B+ = 174 - 179 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>B = 167 - 173 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>B- = 160 - 166 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convos (15)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C+ = 154 - 159 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
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**Pandemic Teaching and Learning Guidelines:**

Our guiding assumption is that our classes and other course activities will generally be held face to face this semester. However, our collective health and safety comes first. Here are some guidelines in case it is not possible for students to attend or for our class to meet face to face, as well as some guidelines and expectations for our face to face meetings.
When we are in class together on campus, we will follow the college’s Face Coverings Policy. We will also follow the practices specified in the Mac Stays Safer Community Commitment. Please plan to wear a well-fitted mask during our (indoor) class meetings. We will revisit masking requirements if college guidelines change during the semester; however your professor reserves the right to continue masking requirements for our course.

If you are sick, or are required to isolate or quarantine, please do not come to face to face class meetings. If you are feeling sick, have symptoms or have tested positive for Covid-19, or are required to isolate or quarantine, please let me know as soon as possible that you will be absent. We will make arrangements for you to make up any material or activities missed. Participation points will not be reduced for excused absences under this policy.

If I am not able to teach our class in person I will contact everyone as soon as possible, and we will hold class via Zoom on those dates. The course schedule and reading assignments may be adjusted accordingly.

Our primary line of communication will be by email – I will email the entire class in case of any face-to-face scheduling changes, and please e-mail me if you are not able attend class. If it is not possible to email, please call or text me on my cell phone (651)336-3930 – but also please identify yourself in the message in case I don’t recognize your number.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about maintaining safety in the classroom or other class-related meetings. We will revisit these guidelines if conditions or college guidelines change during the semester.

Disabilities: Macalester College works hard to ensure that all facilities and programs are accessible to all students, and I am happy to make appropriate accommodations for disabilities as provided under College policy. Any students who believe that they may need accommodations due to disability should email the Disability Services office at disabilityservices@macalester.edu, or call 651-696-6974 to schedule an appointment to discuss your individual needs.

Religious Holidays: I am also happy to make accommodations for you to observe religious holidays and practices. I appreciate advance notice of absences required for religious observances.

Academic Integrity:
Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work; violations of academic integrity are serious offenses. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty -- including, for instance, forgery, cheating, and plagiarism -- are subject to disciplinary action. Examples of behavior that violates this policy, as well as the process and sanctions involved, can be found on the Academic Programs website, http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/. Please review and make yourself familiar with these policies, and please feel free to talk to me if you have any questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism in the context of our class assignments and exam.
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS COURSE SCHEDULE

Thursday, September 1
Welcome and Introductions

Tuesday, September 6
Some Thought Experiments in Environmental Philosophy
(no readings assigned)

Thursday, September 8
Hourdequin, “Environmental Ethics: The State of the Question”

Tuesday, September 13
hooks, “Touching the Earth”
Kimmerer, “Asters and Goldenrods” (from Braiding Sweetgrass)
Thoreau, “Walking”
Anderson, “Sigurd Olson’s Wilderness Philosophy Still Resonates at Listening Point”
Olson, “Listening Point”
Shirin-yoku: Forest Bathing
https://japanesegarden.org/2022/08/15/shinrin-yoku/
Seek App by iNaturalist
https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app

Thursday, September 15
Bullard, “Environmental Racism”
Whyte, “Settler Colonialism, Ecology, and Environmental Injustice”
Mitchell, “Racism as a Motivator for Climate Justice”
La Duke, “What Would Sitting Bull Do?”
Dozens of Line 3 Protesters in Minnesota Still Facing Prosecution (on Moodle)
Advocates Hope White Earth Wild Rice Case Will Boost Rights of Nature

Tuesday, September 20
Leopold, “The Land Ethic”
Cahen, “Against the Moral Considerability of Ecosystems”

Thursday, September 22
Light, “Urban Ecological Citizenship”
Norton and Hannon, “Environmental Values: A Place-Based Approach”
Campbell, et al., “Not by Trees Alone: Centering Community in Urban Forestry”

Tuesday, September 27
Cafaro, “Toward an Environmental Virtue Ethic”
Bannon, “Being a Friend to Nature: Environmental Virtues and Ethical ideals”
**Thursday, September 29**
Warren, “The Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism”
Plumwood, “Nature, Self and Gender”
Gaard, “Toward a Queer Ecofeminism”

**Tuesday, October 4**
Whyte and Cuomo, “Ethics of Caring in Environmental Philosophy”
Gaard, “Vegetarian Ecofeminism”
Plumwood, “Surviving a Crocodile Attack”

**Thursday, October 6**
Gruen, “Why Animals Matter”
Singer, “Ethics and Animals: Extending Ethics Beyond Our Own Species”
Regan, “The Radical Egalitarian Case for Animal Rights”

**Tuesday, October 11**
Palmer, “Placing Animals in Urban Environmental Ethics”
Sebo, “Animals and Climate Change”

**Thursday, October 13**
Hourdequin and Wong, “A Relational Approach to Environmental Ethics”
James, “Zen Buddhism and Environmental Ethics”

**Tuesday, October 18**
Ojomo, “Environmental Ethics: An African Understanding”
Terblanche-Greef, “Ubuntu and Environmental Ethics”

**Thursday, October 20**  
Fall Break – No Class

**Tuesday, October 25**
Gardiner, “A Perfect Moral Storm: Climate Change, Intergenerational Ethics and the Problem of Moral Corruption”
Jamieson, “Jack, Jill and Jane in a Perfect Moral Storm”
Broome, “The Ethics of Climate Change”

**Thursday, October 27**
Schwenkenbecher, “Is there an obligation to reduce one’s individual carbon footprint?”
Kingston and Sinnott-Armstrong, “What’s Wrong With Joyguzzling?”
Andreou, “Way to Go, Me”
Crowe, “It Makes No Difference What We Do: Climate Change and the Ethics of Collective Action”

**Tuesday, November 1**
Chislenko, “The Role of Philosophers in Climate Change”
Green and Brandstedt, “Engaged Climate Ethics”
Rosenbaum, “Paths to Witnessing – The Ethics of Speaking Out”
Duvernoy, “Thinking in Crisis: Towards an Ethics of Speculation”
Thursday, November 3
Hall and Tamir, “Killing Mosquitoes – Think Before You Swat”
Trewavas, “The Foundations of Plant Intelligence”
Wienhues, “Looking Through the Microscope: Microbes as a Challenge for Theorizing”
Hey, “Attunement and Multispecies Communication in Fermentation”

Tuesday, November 8
Hettinger and Throop, “Refocusing Ecocentrism: De-Emphasizing Stability and Defending Wildness”
Mazor, “A Conservation Dilemma”
Straka, “Conservation Leadership Must Account for Cultural Differences”

Thursday, November 10
Kretz, “Hope in Environmental Philosophy”
McShane, “The Role of Awe in Environmental Ethics”

Tuesday, November 15
Barnhill, et al., “Moral Reasons for Individuals in High-Income Countries to Limit Beef Consumption”
Ferguson and Thompson, “Why Buy Local?”

Thursday, November 17
Williamson, “Space Ethics and Protection of the Space Environment”

Tuesday, November 22
Prepare for Group Project Presentations

Thursday, November 24   Thanksgiving Break – No Class

Tuesday, November 29
Group Project Presentation

Thursday, December 1
Group Project Presentation

Tuesday, December 6
Group Project Presentation

Thursday, December 8
Group Project Presentation

Finals Week
Take Home Final Exam